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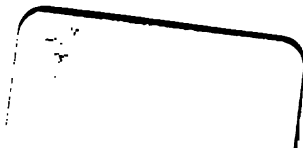
IN THE VALLEY OF THE YANGTSE

BY
MRS ARNOLD FOSTER



WITH
SIXTY-FOUR
ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY





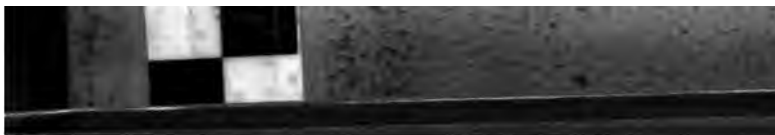
LIST OF VESSELS.

JOHN WILLIAMS (steamship)	} IN THE SOUTH SEAS AND NEW GUINEA.
NIUE (lugger)	
OLIVE BRANCH (schooner)	
HANAMOA (cutter)	} NEW GUINEA. Native Teachers.
And many Whale Boats used by Missionaries and	
MORNING STAR (steel lifeboat)	} ON LAKE TANGANYIKA. IN INDIA. IN CHINA.
JESSIE (Berhampur) and TARA (Calcutta)	
GOSPEL BOAT (Amoy)	





A RIVERSIDE SCENE : PUMPING WATER.



IN THE VALLEY OF THE YANGTSE

BY

MRS. ARNOLD FOSTER

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY, HANKOW

COMPILER OF "AN ENGLISH AND CHINESE POCKET DICTIONARY"

WITH SIXTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

TWO thousand years ago, when the ancient Britons hunted in our great forests, and the Druids offered human sacrifices to appease the anger of their gods, China was already a civilized country. Gentlemen and ladies dressed in silks and satins, and lived in fine houses; their sons learnt to read and write, and were well versed in the native classics. The Emperor lived in a splendid palace, and the officials behaved with ceremonial politeness. Centuries passed by, and still China was ahead of England. Gunpowder, the mariner's compass, and the art of printing were invented in China before they were thought of in Europe.

And yet to-day China needs our missionaries! For civilization cannot save from sin, nothing but the Cross of Christ can do that. China has had religions, priests, and sacrifices; but they were thought out and planned by man, very little in them was of God, and so they could not bring forgiveness, peace, salvation.

There is much misery to-day in China and more sin. Confucius told people to be good, Buddha pitied the suffering world, but Christ alone had power to make men good, and to save them by the sacrifice of Himself.

A Chinese Christian preacher once gave the following illustration: "A poor man fell into a deep pit from which he could not

escape. Confucius came to the edge, looked down, and said: 'You should not have fallen in there; it was very foolish of you not to be more careful.' Then Buddha came, and, leaning over, he looked sympathetically down, and said, 'Poor man! I am very sorry for you; I wish I could help you.' Then the Christ came, and, climbing down the steep sides of the pit, He laid hold of the man, who was powerless to help himself, and brought him safely up out of the pit."

To-day Christ is looking down on the sinning, suffering millions of China. He wants to speak to them by our voices, to raise them by our hands. Shall we say, "No; I would rather live in happy England than in heathen China," when He calls us to be His messengers?

To some He says, "You boys and girls, who cannot go yourselves, I want you to help to send others. For My sake, will you not deny yourselves that the heathen who are in darkness and danger may see the light and be saved?"

What will you answer? Will some say, "I have so little money, and I do like sweets, and there are so many pretty things in the shops I long to buy, I really cannot spare anything for the missionary box"? Did you ever hear of Mencius, one of the greatest of Chinese philosophers? He said, "I like fish, and I also like bears' paws. (Bears' paws are eaten in China as a great delicacy.) If I cannot have the two together, I will let the fish go and take the bears' paws. So I like life, and I also like righteousness. If I cannot keep the two together, I will let life go and choose righteousness."

I hope some of you will say, "I like books and toys and sweets, but I like pleasing Christ better. If I cannot buy the nice things



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"I should like for myself, and also help to send the Gospel to the heathen, I will do without the things I want, and do what I know Christ wishes me to do."

When the last hour of your life comes, those fleeting pleasures that look so tempting now will appear very small indeed; but you will rejoice greatly if, looking back over your life, you can feel that, with all its imperfections, yet its aim has been, not to please self, but Christ.

Although this book is called *In the Valley of the Yangtse*, some of the events related in it have taken place in Peking, Canton, and other parts of China. But in many things life is much the same throughout the Empire, and I have tried only to mention those that illustrate Chinese life as it is in the valley of the Yangtse.

Though most of this book has been written from personal experience gained during the eighteen years which I have spent in China, still in some chapters I have made much use of the works of various authors, to whom I now wish thankfully to acknowledge my obligations.

The chief books which I have consulted besides the *L.M.S. Chronicle* and other missionary magazines are the following:—

The Middle Kingdom, by Dr. Wells Williams.

Social Life of the Chinese, by the Rev. Justus Doolittle.

Haulin Papers, by Dr. Martin.

The Chinese, by Sir John Davis.

Mesny's Miscellany.

Chinese and Their Rebellions, by T. T. Meadows.

I have not thought it necessary to give references to these

works in footnotes, though in some cases sentences have been quoted almost verbatim from them, for I have abridged the descriptions, and simplified the language, to make my book more suitable for young readers.



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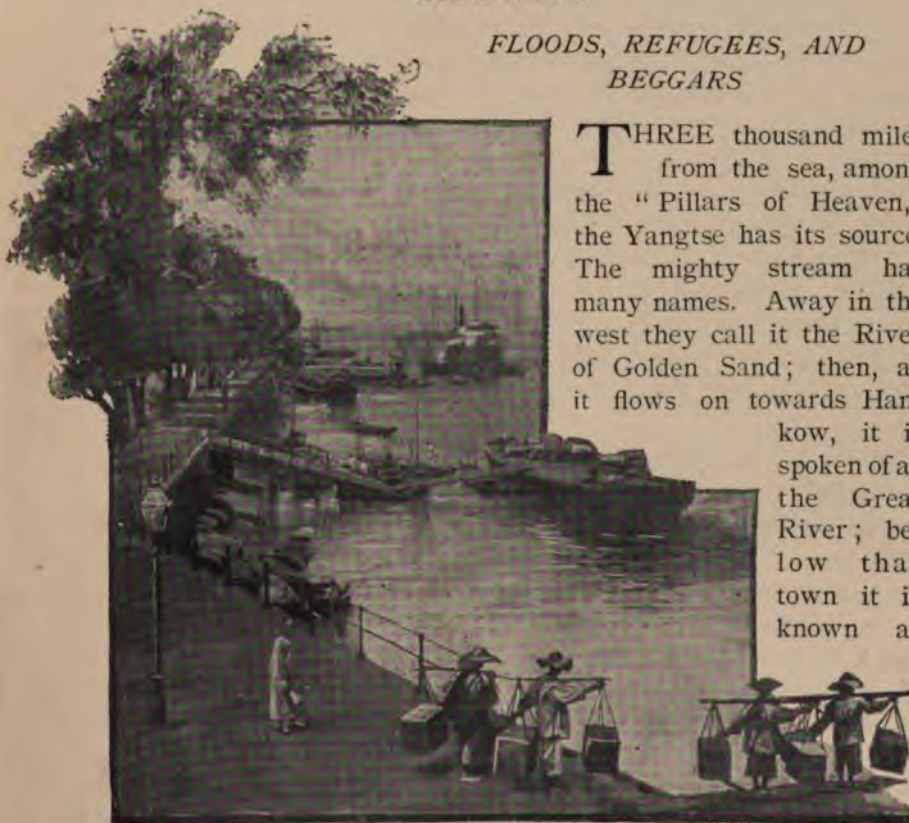
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IN THE VALLEY OF THE YANGTSE

CHAPTER I

FLOODS, REFUGEES, AND BEGGARS

THREE thousand miles from the sea, among the "Pillars of Heaven," the Yangtse has its source. The mighty stream has many names. Away in the west they call it the River of Golden Sand; then, as it flows on towards Hankow, it is spoken of as the Great River; below that town it is known as



THE BUND, HANKOW.

the Long River. Steamers of light draught can go up it for a thousand miles as far as Ichang, and large ocean steamers come up to Hankow every summer, though that is more than six hundred miles from its mouth.

Thousands of Chinese boats carry passengers and cargo from place to place on its banks, and great rafts of timber are floated down from the forests in the west. Those in charge of these unwieldy rafts live in little huts built on the floating timber. Sometimes a whole hamlet seems to be drifting leisurely down, as if a few extra weeks on the way would make no difference to the passengers. You get used to long journeys in China. Distances are more often measured by days than by miles. Missionaries will tell you that their stations are "a month's journey from Hankow," or "three weeks' journey from Chungking," instead of saying how far off they are from those cities.

We have no railways yet in the valley of the Yangtse, though we hope for them before long. Meanwhile the quickest way of travelling is by water. As I have said, steamers go up and down the Yangtse, but elsewhere we go in small native boats. If there is a fair wind, they sail pretty quickly; if not, they must be rowed, poled, or towed, and all these are very slow ways of getting from place to place.

And distances are long in China. It seems strange at first, as you look at the narrow river Han, to hear that boats go up it for a thousand miles, for its mouth is very narrow, and is often blocked with boats. It empties its waters into the Yangtse at Hankow. Hankow means the "mouth of the Han." When we take a boat to go up the Han to the other end of the city, it is not at all unusual for the boatman, after rowing a few minutes, to declare that he can go no farther, the river is blocked! For some way he works his flat-bottomed boat along, pushing off from the boats on either side of him, using his hands and his boat-hook a good deal more than his oars, but after a time the crowd of boats gets more dense, and he has to give it up. If possible, he gets near the bank for us

to land; if not, we must walk across the boats that lie between us and the shore, and get to land as best we can!

Large boats that have brought a cargo from the north or the west often anchor in the Han till all their cargo is sold. Some of these have a small log tied to the mast, to signify that firewood may be bought on board; others hang up a large basket, which means that they have rice for sale; others sell oil, and others paper. All



AT THE MOUTH OF THE HAN.

along by the bank of the river there are rows of these boats, leaving only a rather narrow passage free for navigation. And that is how it is that when there are more boats than usual the river so easily gets blocked.

The banks of the Han are a strange sight. Some part or other is always being washed away by the river, and yet the Chinese build to the very edge of the bank. The houses are, many of them,

supported by piles—long poles driven into the bottom of the river, their tops on a level with the streets. Built on these the houses are out of reach of the summer floods. When a freshet (or sudden rise of the river in consequence of rain) occurs, the water rushes down with such force that no boatman dares to venture on it. Then much of the earth is washed away from the banks, and piles often give way. Many of them lean over the river, slanting dangerously. Yet the people living in the wooden houses built upon them do not move, and no inspector comes round to tell them that the houses must be pulled down! Poor things! they have no place of refuge to which they can go, and so they live on in their slanting homes till the tiles fall off the roof and part of the walls gives way; even then they often patch up the holes with matting, and stay on. You can tell that the house is still inhabited by the clothes hung out to dry on the little wooden drying-ground built out on its roof: blue cotton trousers stretched out at full width, calico stockings stuck wrong way up on poles, children's red jackets, much wider than they are long, a pair of leather boots that have just been washed and put out to dry, and all the strange medley that go to make up the washing of a Chinese family,—all are hung out on the sloping platforms over many a ruinous house.

Sometimes under these dangerous buildings you see beggars living between the piles, at least they get a roof over their heads there, though it seems likely that it may fall upon them one day soon! But it is only in winter that they can sleep there, for in summer the river rises to the top of the bank.

A flood in China is a terrible thing. When the great river Yangtse is full to the brim, and pours its waters out over all the country round, it is a wonderful sight. There is great excitement as the river rises from day to day. Sometimes we go up to the city wall, and look out over the plain. A walk of about half a mile from our house brings us to a quaint gateway, with picturesque corners to its roofs, curving upward like the prow of an old Roman boat. Three large Chinese characters inform us that this is the



A FISHER ON THE BANKS OF THE YANGTSE.

"Gateway of Great Wisdom." When the river rises, a dam is built across it to keep the water out.

At each side of the gate there are steps leading up on to the wall, which is a great embankment of earth, the outside being faced with stone and brick. Going up the steps, we find ourselves on a broad path, some fifteen feet wide, at the top of the bank, and gazing out over the parapet, we can see for many miles out over the plain that stretches to the north of Hankow.

We know it *is* a plain, or else in summer we might think it was the sea! For there is nothing but water as far as the eye can reach, except a few little islands dotted about here and there, and some distant hills on the horizon. The islands are mounds that have been made by the farmers on which to build their houses, as they know that every year their fields will go under water. So from ten to twenty farmers build their houses on one large mound, and when the river rises and floods the whole surrounding country they take it very quietly, merely putting out great nets over their fields, to catch fish in the very spot from which they have just reaped their harvest! Only sometimes the river rises early, and they lose all their crops; but they generally reap in May, before the flood comes. It would have to be a very high flood indeed to come into their houses on the mounds.

But there are huts just outside the city gate that are not built on mounds, so every summer they go quite under water, with only the roofs showing: and as we look sadly at them we know that hundreds of poor people from other low-lying places must be flooded out of house and home too.

Where do they go?

Walking on a little, we see a number of huts on the wall. They are made of straw mats tied together on poles; some have neatly rounded roofs, high enough for the inmates to stand upright under them, while others are low and shapeless, and the mats are so old and torn that the next high wind will probably tear them to pieces. The people living in these wretched huts have been obliged by the

rising water to leave their own houses, and not having money enough to rent even a single room, they have come up on to the city wall and pitched their mat tents there.

The chief attraction of this site is that, besides being above the reach of the flood, there is no ground-rent to be paid, but the poor people may be turned out by the authorities if they stay too long. Notices are often put up when the flood is over, telling them to return to their homes and cultivate their fields; and if after a reasonable time they did not do so, soldiers would probably be sent to pull down their little huts! Some of these huts are eight or nine feet long and four or five broad; some are larger, and some smaller; but in most of them a whole family live, sleeping on the bare earth often at night, with only a mat or an old quilt under them, while in some of the huts two families have taken up their abode. And yet, perhaps, these are not the very poorest people. Some have not money enough even to buy mats, and have to stay as long as possible in their half-flooded dwellings, the only other thing for them to do being to sleep in the street, with no roof at all to shelter them!

I remember one year when the whole neighbourhood was under water. We could row about in our garden, and one Sunday we went from our verandah to the chapel in a boat! Our English houses have good, high foundations, and none of them were flooded; but it was sad indeed for many of the poor Chinese, whose houses were on low ground, especially as they had no second storey into which they could escape when the water rose.

As we looked into their wretched houses we felt so sad. They put a few boards on trestles, raising them day by day as the water rose, and on this little platform the whole family sat—children, babies, dogs, pigs, fowls and all. I do not think the small boys minded it much,—it was hot weather, and they ran about without any clothes, in and out of the water as they liked, their brown little bodies soon drying in the sun,—but it was miserable work for the women and girls sitting indoors, anxiously watching the rise of the water till it was so high that their heads touched the tiles; and then

they had to move, even if there was no house to which they could go. For there are no workhouses in China to take such people in, and very few asylums of any sort to help the miserable and wretched. China is a heathen land, and where people have not learnt to keep the first great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," they do not keep the second either, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And so it is that in a heathen land those that are rich and strong for the most part just live to please themselves, and do not go about doing good and helping the poor and sad, as we know we ought to.

But when missionaries go to heathen lands they want the people to understand that God loves them all, and that He has taught us to love them too. So when great trouble comes, like the terrible famine in North China in 1878, missionaries go to visit the sufferers, and distribute relief sent out by Christian people in England; and even in a smaller trouble, like a flood in Hankow, we try to do what we can.

So one day, when the water was over all the roads, we hired a boat and rowed to the city wall. We had written a number of tickets for two hundred cash, which we distributed from house to house, and then we brought the money in a boat. It is never wise to carry much money with you when visiting among the very poor in China; if they saw you giving it away they would probably mob you, and the strongest would get it all, while you would be thankful if you escaped from their clutches with nothing worse than a torn coat. And that is why we gave tickets and took the money in a boat. Also the money is very heavy. Have you ever seen Chinese cash? They are copper coins about the size of a farthing, with a square hole in the middle of each, so that you can string them together. This is the easiest way of carrying them, for it takes forty to make a penny; we keep them tied up in strings of a hundred, which saves trouble in counting them too. As soon as the boat appeared near the city wall the people came running down the steep slope with their tickets, which were quickly exchanged for cash;

and then we knew that all those living in the mud huts on that part of the wall, at any rate, had money enough to buy food for two or three days.

If any of you boys and girls would like to help in this sort of work,



THE RIVERSIDE SUBURB OF A CHINESE CITY.

you can send money to some missionary you know, saying it is for the relief of the poor. I am sure any missionary in China would find it easy to make a good use of it.

When the flood is over and the water gradually goes down, the

poor people go back to their houses, but they often find them in ruins. Where the walls are made of wattle and mud, the water washes away the mud, and only the split bamboos remain, forming very airy walls indeed, better for ventilation than for privacy! The tiled roof with its heavy beams is supported by wooden posts; these sometimes give way if there is a storm while the water is high, and then the whole roof comes down and the ruin is complete. Even if this has not happened, the mud floors take a long time to dry, and there is generally a good deal of illness while the water is subsiding in the flooded districts.

When the Yellow River bursts its banks, and suddenly floods vast tracts of country, the distress is much greater than when the Yangtse quietly overflows its banks at Hankow. In some places higher up the Yangtse is embanked, and so are many rivers in other parts of China; and wherever this is the case the people are liable to sudden and terrible disaster. Many lives are lost in this way every year, and promising crops are destroyed, while the dead bodies of cows and buffaloes are often swept down past Hankow by the rushing waters.

In closing this account of our floods, I will quote an Imperial decree from the *Peking Gazette* of October 30th, 1897. The Emperor says: "We have received the usual report from the Director-General of the Yellow River in Honan, reporting that the embankments of the said river have been so well attended to during the autumn that there has been no trouble along the whole course guarded by the memorialist this year. This is certainly due to the benevolence of the river gods, and we feel duly thankful for their protection over the people. We therefore command that ten large-sized Tibetan incense sticks be sent by the Imperial Household Department to the said Director-General of the Yellow River, who is also commanded to offer them at the altars of the gods in the Dragon King's Temple in the vicinity."

It is not only in time of flood that the poor people suffer so much. Every winter when the great river Yangtse falls it leaves

a wide margin of dried mud by each bank; on this mud hundreds of little mat huts are put up, just like those on the city wall in time of flood. Who live in these huts?

Poor people from the country, who have come into the great city to escape starvation.

In China most of the country people own a little land; this they cultivate carefully, and manage generally to get enough to eat through the summer, and perhaps they grow enough cotton to make themselves some coarse clothes. The women and girls spin it for home use. But they often eat up all their little harvest before the winter comes, and as there is nothing to do in the country then, they come into the towns. The men try to get work, and the women and children beg in the streets. These are the people who put up the little mat huts by the side of the river. Even if the men get work, the pay for what they can do is very small. Sometimes a number of them get employed in carrying earth. A piece of ground is to be raised, so as to be well above the level of the summer floods, and this is done by hiring coolies to bring earth from the river banks. Each man has two baskets, which he suspends from either end of a bamboo placed across his shoulder. He goes to the river, fills his baskets with mud, and brings it to the lot which is to be raised. When the distance is about a quarter of a mile, he will get a farthing for two journeys. But digging up the earth and filling his baskets takes time, so he cannot earn very much even if he is busy all day. Yet the number of unemployed is so great that, as soon as it is known that a plot of land is to be raised, scores, if not hundreds, of coolies quickly appear, anxious to be engaged for carrying the earth needed. In China there are always very many wanting work, but not able to get it even for the very smallest pay.

So while the men are working, or looking for work, their wives and children are making what they can by begging. Walking up the crowded, narrow streets of any Chinese city, especially in winter, we are beset by beggars. Women with tiny,

wailing babies, ragged little boys and girls—they literally swarm in every direction. The women often try to seize our sleeves, begging loudly in their country speech, "Give us money to buy rice-gruel! Heap up happiness for yourself!" This means, "Do good, and Heaven will reward you." Like true heathen, they only expect to influence us by selfish motives. The children run after us long distances shouting, "Give us foreign money! Give us foreign money!" (They naturally prefer silver ten-cent pieces to copper cash.) Besides these there are people in all stages of misery and disease. A loathsome leper sits by the side of the road, displaying his sores, an old, white-haired woman knocks her forehead on the pavement to excite pity, while a blind boy sits next her holding out his little basket of cash, that we may judge by the number already given what a deserving case his is! Some of these are old residents, and have been begging in the same streets for many years, while others only come in for the winter, and return to their fields in the spring.

The usual gift to a beggar is one cash (the tenth part of a farthing), but people often give small cash, which are only worth half as much; so that it takes a great many of these gifts to get a good meal.

But these beggars do not expect good meals. There are benevolent institutions in many large cities in China which are opened in the winter months for supplying rice-gruel at very small cost to the poor. For three cash they can buy a bowl of this watery rice, and it is on this that most of the beggars live as long as the rice kitchens are open. The struggle to get it is so great that the weak, half-starved women and children sometimes get badly crushed or trampled on as they try to approach the door. Yet if this unsweetened, tasteless rice-gruel were given to you, English boys and girls, for dinner, I hardly think you would be thankful for it! Next time you are tempted to grumble because of some food you do not like will you think of Chinese beggars in their hunger, and remember to be thankful?

Many of these poor people have no homes at all, not even a mat shed, but sleep out of doors, on the roughly paved streets. In Central China the weather is often frosty, and hardly a night passes during the coldest part of the year without some poor beggar dying of cold and hunger in the street.

In most of the large cities there are professional beggars under the control of certain head-men, whose names are entered in the office of the district magistrate in the city. These head-men do not beg themselves, and are often well-off and live quite comfortably—they might be called the kings of the beggars. They divide the streets of the city among the beggars, who then go in little companies to make as much as possible out of the district allotted to them. They go about with sticks and gongs; entering shops, they make so much noise that the buyers and sellers can hardly hear one another speak; this makes the shopkeeper so anxious to get rid of them that he gives them a cash each, and then they go away at once.

Some of these shopkeepers make an agreement with the head-man of the district, by which they pay him a certain sum every year on condition that the beggars under his control shall not come to beg of them. He takes the money, dividing part of it among the beggars, and, of course, keeping a good share for himself. He then gives the shopkeeper a strip of red paper to paste up by his door, on which is written a Chinese sentence meaning, "The brethren must not come here to disturb and annoy." After this, if any of the professional beggars come to that shop they are shown this strip of paper and told to go away, which they usually do at once. Should they persist in begging, the shopkeeper may beat them and drive them away, which he would not dare to do unless he had this proof of an agreement between himself and the king of the beggars.

Of course, poor people who have come in from the country are not under the rule of this head-man—they beg wherever they can, whatever agreements may have been made by him. These are

the people whom we pity most, and for whom we long to do something.



BLIND BEGGARS.

A great many of the beggars are blind; we often see a string of blind women walking through the streets, holding on to one another and begging as they go, the one who leads them feeling

her way with a stick from street to street. There are no blind asylums among all the hundreds of millions in China, except a very few started by missionaries from Christian lands.

There are no asylums for the deaf and dumb either, or for cripples, and what is, perhaps, worst of all, there are none for the idiots and insane. If a man goes out of his mind, his friends have to keep him at home, unless he gets too violent; then they send him to the magistrate, who has him chained up in prison. Should a madman kill any one, he would be tried just as if he were sane, and if found guilty would be condemned to death.

Justice and love are not the fruits of heathenism, but of the religion of Jesus Christ; and we long for the time when His followers shall open asylums for these poor, afflicted people through all the heathen world, and so show forth the beauty of His spirit and teaching. As it is, missionaries are so few and have so little money to spend on such things that it seems almost hopeless to try and think of helping the multitude in their sore need, but we remember St. Paul's words, "That I might by all means save some," and we know that our heavenly Father, who careth for the sparrows, cares much more for these His children for whom Christ died, so we try to do what we can, though it seems so very little.

I will now tell you about two little beggar boys whom Mr. Foster got to know, and I think you will like to read in his own words how he tried to help them.

"The first of these lads I used always to find sitting near a gateway in a narrow alley through which I passed several times a week. He was almost blind, and looked very ill. For clothing he had only a few rags, and he appeared to be a very picture of dirt and misery. Several times as I passed him I gave him a few cash; but one day I thought I would find out more about him, so I stopped and enquired of him where he lived. 'Here,' he replied. 'In this street?' I asked. 'Yes,' he said, 'just where you see me. I beg here all day, and sleep under the gateway at night.'

'Have you no one to look after you?' I asked. 'Have you no parents?' 'No,' was the answer. 'I am all alone.' 'But who brings you your food?' 'Oh, I get it myself. When I have begged enough to pay for it I go to a shop where they sell rice-gruel and buy a basin of it.' I said no more, but gave him a few cash and passed on, inwardly resolving, however, that I would



CHINESE EATING HOUSES.

try next day to rescue the poor little fellow from the sad life he was living. It was warm summer weather then, and the few rags the child had about him were all that were positively necessary for him, but I knew that even if he could continue to get enough food to eat, he would certainly die of cold directly the winter began, unless he were provided with some warm clothing

and proper shelter. If I had been in England, it would have been a very simple matter to ask the boy if he would come with me, and to tell him I would provide him with a lodging and food and clothing; but the Chinese are very suspicious of Europeans, and tell all manner of dreadful stories about the wicked things that Europeans do with children. Most of these stories are quite false and very silly into the bargain, but the people believe them. I knew that if I had offered to take this little blind boy away with me, some of the bystanders would at once have thought I was going to do him some injury; and probably the child himself would have been very much frightened if some one had told him he was in the hands of an Englishman. So, instead of saying anything about what I wanted to do, I went home and thought over the best plan of saving the boy.

"Next morning I asked a Chinese friend, named Wun, whom I have known for many years as a kind-hearted Christian man, to go for me to the place where the little beggar sat, and to tell him that there was a gentleman who would find a home for him, and feed and clothe him if he liked to give up his begging. Mr. Wun gladly undertook to do what I had asked him, and gave the child my message. Directly he heard it, he at once jumped at the offer, and it was not long before my friend came back to the house bringing the little beggar boy with him. I had guessed that he was about eight years old, for he was very small and looked quite a child; but when I asked him his age he told me he was thirteen! I put a number of questions to him which I had not been able to ask him in the street the first time I spoke to him, and I soon found that he had indeed had a sad history, and had already seen more trouble than many people meet with in a long life-time. He said his father was still living, so far as he knew, but he had not seen him for a long time. He was a very bad man, who spent all he had in gambling, smoking opium, and doing other wicked things. He was too lazy to work, and had at last got rid of his wife (the little boy's mother), and of

his four children. 'Were you sold to somebody?' I asked. 'Yes,' he said; 'for eight hundred cash.' 'And what did the man who bought you do with you?' I enquired. 'He thought of adopting me for his son, as he had no children of his own; but he was very cruel to me, and at last gave me away to somebody else, who lived in the country, to look after oxen.' 'Well, and how did your new master treat you?' 'Soon after I went to him,' he replied, 'I became very ill, and during my illness I lost my eyesight. When my master found that I was no longer of any use in minding his oxen, he made up his mind to turn me off. He lived about ten miles from here, at a country village; and one day, when he was coming into town to buy some things, he brought me with him, and while we were in the street he slipped away, without telling me what he was going to do, and left me altogether. Ever since then I have been sitting where you saw me, begging from passers-by.'

"'Well,' I said, 'you are all right now. Everybody here will be kind to you, and you will have a home, with plenty of food, and all the clothes you need, and you will never have to beg any more.' Poor little boy! his sad face lighted up, and he said, 'Who would have thought of my having such happiness as this?' I then made him take a warm bath, called a barber to shave his head and plait his little pigtail in true Chinese fashion, rigged him out in a suit of white summer clothes, and had his old rags thrown away. The hardships through which he had passed had made him very weak, and I felt from the first very doubtful whether he would ever grow up to be a man, but I resolved that everything that could be done for him should be done, and I hoped that, with proper food and attention, he might gradually regain his strength.

"He was at once placed under the care of a Chinese widow woman who had a little boy of her own. She treated him with all possible kindness, and the two boys became much attached to one another. An English lady, who often went to see this widow woman, took a deep interest in the little fellow, and began to give him regular

religious instruction. I was very pleased to find how well he remembered what he had been taught, and how readily he could




ITINERANT BARBER.

answer any ordinary question on the Gospel narrative. He also learned by heart, of his own accord, two or three chapters of St. John's Gospel. Being blind and unable to see the characters in

which the Chinese New Testament is printed, he had to get some one else to read the verses over to him, while he repeated them until he knew them perfectly. I have met with many Chinese boys, but, in spite of all the drawbacks of this child's early life, I never met with one who seemed to me to have such a naturally religious disposition as he had, nor with one who seemed to find more real pleasure in listening to the story of our Lord's life and teaching. Two or three months after he came to me he was baptized, by his own desire. The name by which he was called was T'ien-ch'iang, a common name amongst the Chinese, and one which means, being interpreted, 'Heavenly Felicity.'

"For a time the boy seemed to be improving in health, and I hoped he would continue to do so; but early in May he became worse, and had to be taken to the hospital, where in the course of two or three weeks he died. During the few months he had been with us, he had endeared himself to many persons, both English and Chinese; and while he was lying in the hospital he was frequently visited by friends. He died very happy, and a brother missionary of mine, who was with him shortly before the end came, tells me he was much pleased by witnessing the little boy's simple faith in Jesus. We cannot but rejoice now that he has been taken away from what might have been a suffering life, to be at rest for ever with the Lord.

"Now I must give some account of another Chinese boy, whom I wanted to have helped in the same way that I tried to help my little friend T'ien-ch'iang. I had hoped at the outset to be able to bring these two boys up together, but I was disappointed in regard to the second one; and yet even the disappointment has been a joy to me, because it has shown me a brighter side to Chinese beggar life than I thought it was possible that there could be. This other little boy I had known for a long time by sight, as I knew T'ien-ch'iang. He was a cripple, and so terribly deformed that he could not stand up, but could only crawl along, with his legs bent and his head almost touching the ground. He presented



one of the saddest sights I ever saw. I had often met him, but hardly ever twice in the same spot. Sometimes I should meet him in the Chinese street for two days running, and then, perhaps, I should not see him again for a month. When I had succeeded in getting the little blind boy, I determined I would try and get this cripple too; but the difficulty was to know where to find him. A few days later I happened to see him crouching down on a doorstep, with a little wicker tray beside him, such as Chinese beggars often hold out when they are asking for cash. For the reason I have already explained, I dared not tell him of my plan for him; indeed, as he was in a busy thoroughfare, I could not say much to him at all, because I knew that directly I began to speak to him, a number of the Chinese who were passing by would stop to listen, and would perhaps imagine at once that I had some bad motive in questioning the child; so I contented myself with stooping down and asking, 'Where do you live?' He told me what I wanted to know, and I put a few cash in his tray, and went on. Next day I appealed again to my Chinese friend who had helped me to get T'ien-ch'iang, told him my story, and asked him if he would go in search of the cripple. He at once consented to do so. 'Do you think he will care to come to me?' I asked. 'Oh, yes, of course he will,' was the reply; 'unless, indeed, he has some relatives who are trading on his deformity, and sending him out to beg for them.' He then went off to look for the boy, but came back in about an hour, saying that he was too late for that day. He had discovered where the boy lived, and had learned that he was an orphan, who lived in a hut alone with his brother; but the neighbours had told him that the child had already started with his brother, who was also a cripple, on a begging tour for the day. The day following, Mr. Wun went again soon after daylight, in order to catch the boy before he started on his day's travels. This time he found him. He told him what he had told the little blind boy—that there was some one willing to take charge of him, and to bring him up so that he would never have to beg

again, and never again be in want; and then he asked him if he would like to go with him. 'I couldn't leave my brother,' was the answer; 'we have been together ever since mother died, and I can't leave him now.' Mr. Wun then turned to the elder brother—a young man of about twenty years of age—who was standing by, and asked him what he thought about the matter. He answered, 'It is very kind of the gentleman to offer to take my little brother, and I daresay it would be a good thing for him to go if he could do so, but he can't; he would cry himself to death if I were not with him.' Some of the neighbours who had gathered round and had overheard the conversation now chimed in, and strongly urged the younger brother to go. 'It is not,' said one, 'as if the gentleman were only going to keep you for a month. He offers to take care of you altogether.' 'I understand,' the little fellow replied, 'but I can't go; I can't leave my brother.' When Mr. Wun came back and told me the story, I could not help feeling sorry that I was not to have the child; but at the same time I felt very pleased to hear the reason why he would not come. I had not imagined that there could be such love between Chinese beggars, and I was truly glad to find that such love existed. My first impulse was to make a home for both the brothers; but there were certain difficulties connected with attempting to carry out such a plan which made me think it would not be well to propose it. Once or twice since, when I have seen the little cripple in the street, I have stopped to ask him after his brother; but, as he does not know who it was who proposed to give him a home, I daresay he rather wonders how it is that an Englishman, and a complete stranger to him, should know anything about his brother.

"If the little blind boy's tale of suffering, revealing as it did such a dark picture of Chinese life, had filled me with sadness, this little dwarf's story, showing how much love may exist even amongst Chinese beggars and outcasts, filled me with the deepest thankfulness. 'Love is of God,' I said to myself, 'and these two heathen lads have learned something of the love which comes from

God, although they have never listened to the Gospel which tells how God Himself has loved us!' I hope by degrees to provide for other little waifs and strays of Chinese society as I had hoped to provide for T'ien-chi'ang. Several times as I looked at that child's face, once so sad, afterwards so radiantly happy, I was reminded of our Lord's words, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' and I thought to myself, 'After all, that little lad has given me more happiness than I have given him!' How is it that we do not more often seek the blessings which come through giving, rather than those lower blessings which consist only of receiving?"



A CHILD'S CHAIR.

CHAPTER II

VISITS, GAMES AND FEASTS

YOU must not think from what I have been telling you that all the people in China are poor. There are a good many rich folk there too—some very wealthy indeed.

Sometimes when we are walking through the streets we hear a strange noise, and looking ahead we see two men dragging large split bamboos along the pavement, two more carry whips and shout to the people to get out of the way. Then comes a man holding aloft a large red umbrella, and then some small boys, wearing tall black hats, carrying boards, on which are written some Chinese characters. After these comes a sedan-chair, carried by four coolies, and in it sits a mandarin, dressed in silks and satins, and, if it be winter, in beautiful rich furs. A servant runs behind his chair, carrying his card-case and pipe, and there are generally one or two men on horseback to bring up the rear.

Every one in the narrow street makes way for the great man as he passes on to visit some official in the city.

When he reaches the yamen (as official residences are called) his servant will take in his card, which is a piece of scarlet paper, about eight inches long and four broad, on which his name is written in large black characters.

If the visitor is of high rank, a salute of three guns will be fired on his arrival. The mandarin on whom he is calling will put on his official satin robe before coming out to see his visitor. On the back and front of this robe are square badges, on each of which is embroidered some bird, the nine degrees of official rank



CHANG CHIH-TUNG, VICEROY OF HUPEH AND HUNAN.

being each denoted by a different bird, so that the mandarin's position can be told at once by looking at his dress, as well as by the button on his hat.

The visitor's chair having been carried into the courtyard, the host comes out to receive him, and after numerous bows they succeed at last in getting into their right places in the drawing-room, the guest sitting on the left of his host, in the seat of honour. Of course, tea is brought in, in delicate Chinese covered cups, without milk or sugar ; pipes, and sometimes sweetmeats, are offered too.

The host sends for his sons, who come in carefully dressed, kneel down before the visitor, and knock their heads on the ground with great humility. The guest raises them with a slight bow, and, as they stand at a respectful distance, he makes some polite remark about them to their father, who answers as if he thought little or nothing of them, often speaking of his sons as dogs.

The ladies of the household do not come in on such occasions, and the lads are generally glad to ask to be excused and to leave the guest-room as soon as they can politely do so.

Do you know how gentlemen's sons are dressed in China? They have silk trousers, often pale mauve or light green ; these are tied round at the ankles over their white calico stockings. A long robe of bright figured silk, perhaps yellow or blue, nearly covers them, and over that they have a short jacket with long, wide sleeves. This is generally velvet or silk, dark red and prune-colour are favourite shades. Their shoes are embroidered in different colours, and have thick white soles, so have the black boots which they wear when paying visits. In winter their hats on these occasions are black, with a tassel of bright red silk at the top, and a turned-up brim ; but their summer hats are mushroom-shaped and creamy white. These also have a tassel. When its owner passes the examination which will give him official rank, this tassel is exchanged for a button, but this does not come to

lads. On ordinary occasions boys wear black satin skull-caps in winter, and no hats at all in summer; while poor lads and men who are much exposed to the sun wear straw hats, with very wide, shady brims.

Of course, such a dress as I have just been describing is not suitable for games such as English boys enjoy. But cricket and football would be thought far too undignified for Chinese youths, who are brought up to think chiefly of propriety and etiquette.

They have some games, however. The most amusing that I have seen is shuttlecock. They do not use battledores, but catch the shuttlecock on the side of their heel, and so kick it up into the air again. Sometimes they catch it on their cheek. It is wonderful how long they can keep it up without its coming to the ground.

Kite-flying is another favourite amusement. Some Chinese kites are very cleverly made in imitation of birds, butterflies, and other things. In Hong-Kong the string attached to the kite is sometimes covered with fine bits of glass, so that it cuts like a knife. The game is to get your kite up high in the air, and then see how many other kites you can cut down by cutting their strings with your own. But kites are often flown with common string, just as you fly them in England, only in China you frequently see grown-up men flying kites for their own amusement.

The Chinese do not take their dogs out for walks, as we do, but they may often be seen taking their pet birds for an airing. They saunter along, cage in hand, till they reach a tree, then they fasten the cage in its branches and squat down beneath it, sitting on their haunches, enjoying the fresh air, and listening to the song of their pet bird. They are very fond of a kind of lark which sings sweetly, and on a fine summer day we often see half a dozen youths with their caged songsters on a small piece of waste land on which there are a few trees. There are not many open spaces in the city of Hankow, so they come on to the English Concession with their feathered pets. Some kinds of birds

they carry on perches, and throw seeds into the air for them to catch, but most of them are taken about in cages.

Chess is a favourite game in China. The ancient game was much more difficult than our English chess; it was played with three hundred pieces. But the modern game, which is said to have been invented B.C. 1120, has only thirty-two, like our own.



CHESS-PLAYING IN BUDDHIST MONASTERY.

Across the middle of the board there is a river, guarding which on each side stand five soldiers. Besides these there are a general, two secretaries, two elephants, two horses, two chariots, and two guns. So, you see, it is not quite like our chess, after all.

I have seen boys playing "nine men's morris" just as it is played in England, and they are very fond of games of cards. I am sorry to say the Chinese gamble over all these; indeed, they seem to find it difficult to imagine any one playing a game that

is not for money. Once when I was playing croquet with some friends, a Chinese woman, who had been watching the game, came up to me and asked in a friendly way how much money I had won! Gambling is a great curse in China, it is the ruin of very many youths. One hardly wonders that heathen lads do not think it mean and selfish to take money, which they have not earned, from unwilling companions, who are often driven by the loss of it to dishonesty and ruin; but I do wonder very much that lads brought up in Christian homes can do the same and not feel utterly ashamed of themselves!

Besides these regular games, Chinese boys make up amusements for themselves, which are sometimes cruel and sometimes mischievous. The most cruel are too horrible for me to write about; they often consist in torturing helpless animals and laughing at their agony. Then sometimes a party of boys catch two field-cricket, put them in a basin, and tease them with straws, till they rush at one another in a fury, and fight till one of them is killed or disabled. They train quails to fight in somewhat the same way. Of course, there is much betting over both cricket and quail fights.

Some of their amusements are more mischievous than cruel. As they all wear their hair in a long plait down their back, it is a temptation to roguish lads, when they see two very sedate boys walking quietly along the road in front of them, to tie their plaits together. (Some people call these plaits pigtails, but the proper name for them is queues.) It is a very common sight to see half a dozen merry boys playing "horses" on the street, each holding the one in front of him by his queue.

The Chinese have not always done their hair in this way. The custom was introduced by the first emperor of the present dynasty, who came to the throne A.D. 1644. He was a Manchu, and having conquered the Chinese, he ordered them all to dress their hair in the Manchurian fashion, as a token of submission to his authority. Before that time the Chinese had worn long hair done up in a knob

at the top of their head, but now they had to shave all but the crown, and plait the hair that grew there into a queue, braiding silk into it to make it longer and to form a tassel at the end of the plait. At first the proud Chinese scholars strongly objected to doing their hair in this way, but they found that it was dangerous



CHINESE BARBER AT WORK OUTDOORS.

not to submit. For one thing, only those who did so were allowed to compete at the examinations or to hold office under the Government, and at last they were compelled to wear the queue on pain of death. A few preferred to lose their heads rather than give in, but now all Chinese men wear queues, except the Buddhist priests, whose

heads are wholly shaven, and the Taoist priests, who let all their hair grow long and dress it in the ancient style.

Having told you how the boys dress and play, I will now tell you what they eat. In most parts of China rice is the chief food. It is wonderful how soon a bowlful of this can be shovelled into the mouth with a pair of chopsticks! These are used instead of knives and forks; they are smooth sticks made of bamboo, ivory, or wood, and are both held in the right hand, one on each side of the forefinger. When eating rice the Chinese hold the bowl up to the mouth and shovel the food in with their chopsticks, but meat, fish, and vegetables have to be picked up and lifted to the mouth with great care. These are brought to table already cut up into small pieces, as they could not be carved with chopsticks. Most missionaries have had an amusing time when first invited to Chinese feasts, for without practice it is not easy to handle chopsticks well!

Feasts are sometimes grand affairs in China. Invitations are written on sheets of red paper and sent out some days beforehand. On the day itself a servant goes round to tell the invited guests that the dinner is ready.

On arrival they are welcomed by the host, and are seated at a number of small square tables, each of which seats eight guests. Of course, there is a great discussion as to where they shall all sit, each refusing the honour of the highest seat, but, after much bowing and many humble words, they get into their places at last.

In ordering a feast from a cook-shop it is not usual to say for how many people it is wanted, but for how many tables, each table seating eight people.

A number of little dishes heaped up with sweets, nuts, and dessert are placed on the table, each guest having a small plate, a china spoon, a pair of chopsticks, and a wine-cup provided for him. As soon as the first course appears, every one present dips his chopsticks into one or other of the dishes, and helps, not himself, but his neighbour. It is rather trying to have one's plate filled up with fat pork, stewed duck, sweet dumplings, sharks' fins, salt

eggs, bamboo sprouts, and other delicacies. For clean plates are not provided for different courses, and unless one can eat all that is put into one's plate, it soon gets filled up with a strange mixture of meats and sweets.

Happily, small children are often playing about in the room, and are glad of dainties from the overful plate of some unhappy visitor. Dogs, too, are frequently to be seen under the table, and one can sometimes unobserved bestow morsels upon them. It is customary to throw bones on the floor, and tablecloths are not used at these feasts.

A servant walks round to the different tables with a kettle of steaming wine, or rather spirit distilled from rice. Those who do not drink this can have tea. The Chinese very rarely drink cold water, and never think of offering it to their guests.

English visitors wish for some bread or potato to eat with the meat, but the bowl of rice, which is the Chinese equivalent for this, is not brought on till the end of the feast.

At an ordinary dinner-party there may be only sixteen dishes,—eight large and eight small,—but at a grand feast there are sometimes as many as a hundred and eight, and the meal may take two or three hours.

Some things eaten by the Chinese strike English people as very strange, but birds'-nest soup is not at all bad. It is only the nest of a certain kind of swallow that is used in this way, and that is made of gelatinous seaweed. The soup is clear, and generally has pigeons' eggs floating about in it; but this is an expensive luxury, only eaten by the rich. So is the sea-slug, which the Chinese like very much.

Dog-hams are more common, and cats are sometimes exposed for sale as articles of food. Only the very poor would eat rats and snakes. Both meats and vegetables are hashed into mouthfuls and then stewed, or fried in oil or fat; large joints are never brought on table. The Chinese do not think it nice to drink milk and eat butter and cheese.

They eat frogs, locusts, and all kinds of fish, which they catch in curious ways. Sometimes large nets are fixed in the water, and then fishermen go to a little distance and make a great noise, shouting and beating gongs, to frighten the fish into the nets. Sometimes a man wades in shallow water spearing fish. Others are caught by cormorants, who bring their prey to their masters, as they have rings round their necks that prevent their swallowing the fish themselves. Nets are to be seen in all lakes and rivers, and some of the rice fields are turned into fish-ponds after the harvest has been reaped.

Fish are often dried in the sun and kept for some time before they are eaten. These, as well as dried ducks, are often to be seen hanging up in the houses of the people. The smell from them is not always pleasant, but they are favourite articles of food.

Various kinds of sweetmeats are hawked about the streets; some look very dirty, but the candy is fairly clean.

Some Chinese preserved fruits are very nice indeed. You have probably all tasted preserved ginger that came from China. I believe ginger has always been much eaten in that country; we read in one of their ancient classics that "Confucius was never without ginger when he ate!"



CHAPTER III

IN THE CURTAINED APARTMENTS



HEAD OF A CHINESE CHILD.

“WHAT is the name of your little girl?”

I once asked a Chinese woman.

She smiled in a half-ashamed way as she answered, “Kien-ki” (Picked-up).

“Why is she called that?”

“When she was born I was so disappointed at her being a girl that I was going to throw her away, but her father said he was a Christian, and that Christians must not kill their baby girls; so he picked her up, and we called her Kien-ki.”

But most of the Chinese are not Christians; so every day in China many baby girls are drowned or suffocated, sometimes by their own fathers or mothers, and sometimes by their grandmothers.

Baby *boys* are never killed; they are welcomed even into the poorest households. When the neighbours hear of the birth of a *son* they send their congratulations and presents, but when a little *girl* is born no one congratulates the parents. In country places a neighbour may look in to say how sorry she is; and if there are already two or three daughters in the family, she may add, “I suppose you will drown this one?”

The practice of killing babies is much more common in some parts of China than in others. In many places in the province of Fukien a quarter of the baby girls are killed as soon as they are born, while in some provinces this crime is rare.

Rich people do not drown their little daughters; but most of the people in China are not rich, and they say they cannot possibly afford to bring up several girls. Sons are different. They cost as much to feed and clothe, it is true, but then they will soon be able to earn something; and when boys grow up in China they still live at home, and bring their wages to their parents. So that bringing up sons is like insuring their lives: it is providing for their old age and for a proper funeral. Then, too, they believe that their happiness after death depends very largely on their descendants worshipping at their graves. So they are all, even the very poor, anxious to have sons and grandsons.

But what is the good of having daughters? As soon as they are sixteen or seventeen, if not sooner, they will marry, and go to wait on their husband's parents, and will worship his ancestors, and not their own. So the poor people say that they cannot afford the expense of bringing up girls, and that is why so many of them are killed.

There is no law against it in China, though magistrates sometimes put out proclamations forbidding the people in their districts to drown their baby girls. Neighbours are less likely to blame parents for taking their baby's life than to pity them for being so very poor.

Sometimes, even after the parents have decided to keep their little girl, they find as she grows older and needs more food and more clothes, that they really cannot afford to do so. When father, mother, and four or five children have less than two shillings a week to live on, it is not wonderful that they find it hard to make both ends meet.

The children are sent out to pick up firewood and to gather wild vegetables, and the little boys are sometimes employed to look after a neighbour's cows, but they are often hungry, and when a bad year comes, and the price of rice goes up, the father says to the mother, "I think we must sell one of the children."

If they can find some one willing to adopt one of the girls, or to

take her as a future wife for one of his sons, they will get something for her, besides having one mouth less to feed at home. Sometimes, when compelled to do so for fear of starvation, they sell one of the boys, either to be the adopted son in a richer family or to some theatrical company; but more often they part with the girls. It is easier to sell them to be little slaves, and they will get more money for them than if they were adopted into some other home, but it is not so good for the children.

In most rich families in China there are slave girls, some of them quite little things. While a good many have been sold by their own parents, others have been stolen and then sold.

I knew a woman who had been stolen when she was a very little girl. The rebels had come to the village where she lived, and the people all fled in terror, leaving only the children, who were too small to run away. They had nothing to eat, and were nearly starving, when a man came up to them and offered them cakes. They took them, and followed him to a boat. They were so hungry they would have gone with any one who gave them food. About thirty little children went on board the boat. They were only three or four years old, and as they had been starving for some days, they all ate so greedily that most of them died before the boat reached Hankow! Only eight lived. These were sold for four or five shillings apiece to be little slaves. If they had been older, the kidnapper would have got more for them.

When a father sells his daughter he writes down her name, and the price to be paid for her, also whether she is to be a slave or an adopted daughter. This paper is signed by both her parents and by the go-between who has arranged the sale. If the parents cannot sign their names, they get some one else to write them, and put their mark against them.

Poor little slave girls are made to work hard. I have often seen them carrying children on their backs nearly as big as themselves. They are sometimes cruelly beaten and punished dreadfully for trifling faults. The children of their mistress may treat them most



A STREET SWEEPER.

unkindly, slapping and kicking them, but they have no one to whom they can tell their troubles, and their lives are often very sad.

But when a slave girl is grown up she gets her freedom, for then she is married. Her mistress chooses a husband for her, and, of course, gets the money which he pays for his bride.

It is not only slave girls who suffer in China. Even in rich families the little daughters have a hard time of it. I daresay you have all heard of the small feet of Chinese ladies. Now their feet are not naturally small. Chinese babies' feet are just like those of your little brothers and sisters, and they grow in the same way unless they are prevented. Chinese boys' feet do grow, but in Central China almost all the girls, rich and poor, have small feet.

This is how they manage it. When a little girl is four or five years old her mother, or some woman whom her mother employs, begins to bind her feet. All but the big toe are turned under the foot, and long strips of calico are wound round and round, to bring the heel as near the great toe as possible, and to prevent the foot ever growing any more.

Of course this hurts very much, and the poor little girls cry piteously. For some time after their feet are first bound they can hardly walk at all, but hobble about the room, clinging to the chairs and tables like a baby learning to walk alone. Every time the feet are washed the bandages are tightened, and the pain often keeps the children awake at night. They dare not make a noise for fear of a beating, but they cry quietly, sitting up in bed, hugging their little feet.

If they are carefully bound, and do not get corns or ulcers, the worst of the pain is over in two or three years, and it is wonderful how steadily some of the women and girls can walk about on their tiny feet. Of course, if they stand too long or walk far, their feet hurt, but it has often surprised me that they do not seem to suffer more than they do.

Wealthy ladies' feet are often only three or four inches long, but those of poor women are sometimes five and even six, for they do

not bind children's feet while they are so young among the poor, and they have to walk about more, especially in the country, where we sometimes see women standing nearly knee-deep in liquid mud, planting out the young rice.

Ladies with very small feet are usually accompanied by a slave girl, on whose shoulder they lean when they walk about the house or garden. Of course, they do not walk out of doors. That would be highly improper!

When they do go out, which is not often, they are carried in sedan-chairs, closed in all round, so that no one can see them. Some of these chairs have a square hole in the curtain in front, which is only covered with netting, through which they can see something of the streets as they are carried along. But, except for occasional visits to friends' houses, or to the family graves, they hardly ever go out, except to a temple or theatre. We never meet ladies going shopping in China; goods are brought to the house for them to choose from, or they send a servant to make purchases for them.

Poorer women have much more liberty, and are often to be seen walking slowly along in the busy streets; but, of course, we meet far more men than women wherever we go in China. Perhaps you will wonder what the girls do all day, if they never go out.

Some of the mandarins' daughters have lessons while they are quite young with their brothers—that is, if they have a tutor at home. Of course, they do not go to school. There are no girls' schools in China, except the very few started by missionaries, to which only poor children come; so it is very rare for Chinese girls even to learn to read. What do they do, then?

Most of them are fond of fancy work; they generally make their own shoes, embroidering them beautifully, sometimes with green and gold silk on red satin. They may make fancy head-dresses too, for themselves and their baby brothers and sisters. Some of these are truly wonderful, with ears, eyes, nose, and mouth like a cat; others have a silk fringe hanging down all round. Then they embroider

satin ends for their oblong pillows, or work cross-stitch bibs for the babies.

But they rarely make their own clothes, though they look easy enough to make: they get in a tailor for that; for in Central China men do most of the dressmaking, while women do it in the south. I call it dressmaking, but Chinese girls do not wear dresses. They have long, wide trousers, often bright scarlet, and long jackets down

to their knees. These may be pea-green or light blue. Girls are fond of bright colours in Hankow, but in Hong-Kong and Canton they always wear quiet, dark clothes. Among the poor, women and girls only wear jackets and trousers; but the rich have kilted skirts, sometimes beautifully embroidered and very pretty. In winter their clothes are wadded with raw cotton, so that the children look nearly as broad as they are high; but those who can afford to buy them have jackets lined with fur.

The babies are most amusing; they look like little old men.

Both girls and boys are dressed



SIX MONTHS OLD CHINESE BABY.

in bright trousers tied round at the ankle, and coats of all the colours of the rainbow, with some quaint head-dress to crown all.

The girls like to paint their faces; first they powder them all over and then rouge their cheeks and lips. They all have dark eyes and black hair, which is brushed very smooth with tiny brushes dipped in a sticky hair-wash. They never wear it loose down their backs, but either plaited, or twisted round in a neat little coil at one side or at the back of their head.

They are fond of wearing flowers in their hair. They like sweet-scented ones best; but when they cannot get these, they often wear artificial flowers and ornamental hairpins. So dressing and beauti-



AT NEEDLEWORK.

fying themselves take a good deal of their time. They have not so many games as the boys, but they soon learn to play dominoes and cards with the elder women, gambling, of course, over both games.

In poorer households they are expected to cook the rice and wash the clothes, and to earn what they can by needlework, making calico stockings, or stitching together a good many thicknesses of cotton cloth on to pieces of stiffening, to make soles for shoes. But rich girls have a good deal of leisure, and their lives are very dull and monotonous.

In the "Book of Odes," which all scholars learn by heart in China, there is a poem about a king who came to the throne B.C. 827. I will translate two verses of it, that you may see how differently boys and girls were treated even in those days:—

"Sons shall be born to him.
They shall sleep on couches,
They shall be dressed in robes,
They shall play with sceptres,
Their cry will be loud,
Their vermillion knee-covers will be brilliant,
They will be the princes and kings of the land !

"Daughters shall be born to him.
They shall sleep on the ground,
They shall be dressed in wrappers,
They shall play with tiles,
They shall have neither faults nor virtues.
Wine and food are all they will think about ;
They will bring no trouble on their parents."

Of course, this does not mean that the girls will only think about eating and drinking. The "wine and food" are to be prepared by them for the household; and if they do this well, and do not think of other things, they will bring no trouble on their parents. A Chinese commentator, writing on these verses, says: "If a daughter do nothing wrong, that is enough; that she should be distinguished for what is good is not a happy thing to be desired for her."

Women are never supposed to be their own mistresses; they are bound by "the three obediences." When young they must obey their parents, when married they must obey their husbands,

and when widows they must obey their sons. But, as a matter of fact, strong-minded women often rule the household even in China. It is not an uncommon thing for a man to say that he



CHINESE CHILDREN.

wishes to become a Christian, but his mother objects so strongly that he intends waiting till she dies. In some cases she even threatens to commit suicide if he should be baptized, and so he decides to remain outside the Church till her death.

But while girls are young they are not allowed to have any will of their own; not even in the question of whom they shall marry! For, of course, they will marry *some one*—all respectable girls in China do, unless they become nuns. But this is for their parents to arrange. They betroth them to boys whom they have probably never seen, and they are obliged, come what may, to fulfil the engagement.

Sometimes they are betrothed while they are tiny babies, and sometimes not till they are nearly grown up; but they are almost all married before they are eighteen.

A betrothal is brought about in this way. One day some friend of the family mentions to the parents that he knows of a promising lad, who would be a good match for their daughter. If they seem inclined to listen, he reports to the boy's parents, who have probably asked him to find out about the girl. They then give him a red sheet of paper, on which are written eight words, telling the exact hour, day, month and year of their son's birth. He takes this with a proposal of marriage to the parents of the girl. They write out the time of her birth in the same way, and show the two sheets of paper to a fortune-teller. If he says that the dates go well together, they make further enquiries of the go-between (as the match-maker is called), and when the marriage is arranged the boy's parents send two cards—one with a gilt dragon on one side, and the boy's name and the date of his birth on the other side; the other card has a gilt phoenix on one side, and is sent to the girl's parents for them to write in her name and birthday. The girl's parents keep the dragon-card, and the boy's the phoenix. These are the proofs of the engagement.

Then presents are sent. Even if both families are poor, there will be silver bracelets for the bride and fish and fowls for her mother, who would send back some vermicelli, bread and fruit. After a time the go-between asks them to fix a lucky day for the wedding. For nothing can be done without the match-maker on these occasions. As the ancient ode says:—

"How can he cut wood without an axe-handle?
And how can he get married without a match-maker?"

That poem is so well known in China that match-makers are often called axe-handles!

Some time ago I found some amusing letters on this subject in a Chinese ready letter-writer, and I will now translate them for you. The first is entitled, "Asking a go-between to arrange for the marriage of your son." And this is the letter:—"My young son is old enough to be capped and to have a home of his own, but he is not yet mated. I have heard that the girl in the women's apartments of a certain family is beautiful and of a good disposition. I do not know whether the Fates have decreed that our families shall be closely connected. If the beautiful jewel's parents will listen to your forcible words, please exert yourself to make this alliance. How do I know that you will not receive their golden assent, and make a good match, like that between Chu and Chan? I hope you will give this your careful attention." This is the answer:—"The old man in the moon arranges marriages, and with a red cord binds the feet of the happy pair. So we see that good unions are certainly settled by Heaven! How can they be arranged by the plans of men? You wish your virtuous son to contract a marriage with Miss So-and-so, and have told me to grasp the axe-handle. Your servant ought to imitate Chien-Siu and bring about this alliance. Permit me to write again."

Here is another letter entitled, "Asking a go-between to seek a son-in-law for you."

It runs thus:—"My little daughter is old enough to wear hairpins. The 'Book of Odes' speaks of 'arriving at the happy time.' Truly this is the time with her now! Your acquaintances are very numerous, the people you have seen are necessarily many. I only seek one better than my own sons and brothers for whom my daughter may hold the broom and dustpan. This would satisfy my wishes. I beg you to give it your careful attention and I shall be grateful."

The answer to this letter is as follows: "Beautiful daughters and talented sons are not always to be met with in this world. Your virtuous daughter's beauty and good disposition are from heaven; she ought to have a good partner. I have received your important communication, and beg you to wait for a match to be arranged easily and naturally. Some one shooting at the bird on the screen will hit its eye and be chosen, so will your Honour's command be carried out."

So the go-between is always consulted, either by letter or by word of mouth, and it is through his good offices that the engagement is made. There are usually two go-betweens, a man and a woman; and of course, they expect, and always get, presents for the trouble they have taken. Rich families give quite large sums of money to the match-makers. They are important people, too, during the wedding festivities. It is the female go-between who leads the bride about, telling her when to kneel down, when to get up, when to bow, etc. It always reminds me of a man leading a tame bear about by a string!

But before the wedding-day there is much to be done. When it has been fixed upon the trousseau must be got ready. The bridegroom's friends provide some of this. It is wonderful what fine silks and satins, furs and jewellery are given, even when the families are not very well off. These are put into red boxes, and sent to the bride's house some days before the wedding. A day or two after the arrival of the trousseau the bride's parents send over the furniture they have bought, with the money paid by the bridegroom, for their daughter's new home. It may consist of a bedstead, quilts, tables, chairs, stools, cupboards, kettles, pots and pans, besides a hat for the bridegroom, with a girdle, purse, and shoes, supposed to have been embroidered for him by the bride. They have as many red things as possible, as red is the happy colour in China. The coolies who carry the furniture make as great a show of it as possible; they are paid by the bridegroom in little rolls of cash, neatly done up in red paper.

Wedding presents are given by friends and relations, some of them in money, which is especially welcome on these occasions, when there is so much extravagance. Of course, among the very poor things are done more simply; still they often spend so much that they are in debt for years after the wedding. The evening before the marriage there is a farewell feast for the bride in her old home. The poor girl is very sad; she has to leave her parents and friends, and go to live among utter strangers. If her husband or her mother-in-law should prove to be bad-tempered, she knows she will lead a miserable life. So it is no wonder that she cries a great deal; even if she does not feel sad, it is the proper thing to wail at stated intervals!

Still, the excitement of receiving so many presents and new clothes, and the strangeness of being made the centre of interest for a time, no doubt has its attractions.

On the wedding-day she has her hair shaved square off on her temples, and done up as married women wear theirs. Then she is dressed for the ceremony; not in white, of course, that is mourning in China, but in bright red, red trousers, a red jacket, a red skirt, and a wonderful red head-dress, with a thick red veil that completely covers her face. Sometimes the clothes are embroidered with gold thread, and look very imposing; but I have been told that the bride's costume is often hired from the pawnbroker's, while the bridegroom's satin suit is bought for the occasion.

When her toilet is completed she is put into a heavy red and gilt sedan-chair, only used for weddings. The door of this is locked by her mother, and the key is taken to the bridegroom's house. Four men carry the chair, quite a procession accompanying it. First come men carrying lanterns; then a large, open, red umbrella; then some friends, brothers, perhaps, of the bride, round her chair; a band comes next, playing lively music; and crackers are let off at intervals. The music is very much like Scotch bagpipes. On arriving at the bridegroom's house there are more music and more crackers. The bridegroom is brought forward by the go-between;

IN THE VALLEY OF THE YANGTSE

He unlocks the door of the chair, and two women step forward and help the bride to get out of it. Her face is covered with such a thick veil that she cannot see where she is going. They lead her into the hall, and place her on the right side of the bridegroom. The master of ceremonies calls out in a clear voice,—

“Face outwards and worship heaven and earth!”

So the bride and bridegroom kneel down, and bow their heads three times, knocking their foreheads on the square of red carpet provided for that purpose three times on each occasion.

“Rise!” is the next command; so they both get up off their knees.

“Face inwards and worship your ancestors!”

Hearing this they turn round, kneeling and bowing with their heads to the ground before the ancestral tablet.

“Rise! Worship your parents!”

The obedient couple prostrate themselves in the same way before the bridegroom's father and mother. If there are grandparents, they are saluted in the same manner first, and after the father and mother come the uncles and aunts, if there are any. After this they are led to a table on which there are two cups of wine; these are sometimes tied together with a red silk cord. The cups are put into their hands, but the bride can only pretend to drink, because she must not lift her heavy veil. They then exchange cups, and are supposed to drink what was left in each. The wedding ceremony is then over. Friends come forward to congratulate the happy pair, knocking their heads on the ground before them, and receiving similar bows in exchange.

Then the young couple are allowed to retire to their own room, and the bridegroom may lift his bride's heavy veil, and look at her, for the first time probably in his life!

After a few minutes they are summoned to the feast; not together, of course, the women have theirs in an inner room, while the bridegroom joins the men in the guest hall.

The bride must not eat anything then, and she is not supposed to

speak or laugh for three days. This is not easy, for after the feast the guests come to inspect her. They make all sorts of personal remarks.

"What large feet she has!"



CHINESE BRIDE.

"Her teeth are ugly!"

"Look at her hands!"

The bridegroom stands by, and sometimes calls attention to her good points. All this time the poor girl must not smile, speak, or cry; she tries to look like a statue.

After the third day the bridegroom calls on his wife's parents to thank them for his bride, and then he returns the calls of those who sent presents and came to the feast. At the end of the honeymoon it is usual for the bride and bridegroom to go together to the bride's parents, where they dine, the bride staying for three days in her old home. Of course her mother is anxious to hear how she is getting on, and how she is treated by her husband and mother-in-law.

As weddings like this cost a great deal of money, poor people sometimes buy a girl when she is quite small, and therefore cheap, and bring her up in their own family till she is grown up, when their son can marry her without so much fuss and expense. Though it costs something to keep her, yet she is as useful as a slave-girl, and is often made to work as hard. These poor "little daughters-in-law," as they are called, have not at all an easy life of it. Only the very poor will give up their daughters to such a fate; but sometimes a father is glad to provide for his little girls in this way when his wife dies, and there is no one to look after them in the home. If they are very young no money is paid for them.

But whatever age a girl may be when she is married, she is usually spoken of as a daughter-in-law, and not as a wife. Her chief business is to wait upon her husband's mother. Of course, the young people do not set up a home of their own. Even if there are several brothers, they all bring their wives to live under the same roof, if possible; and to "divide the family"—that is, to set up separate establishments—is spoken of as something wrong.

I once knew a lad of sixteen, who was in service in Hankow. He asked for a holiday, saying he wished to go into the country to get married. His master said, "You cannot bring a wife here to live, and you are only earning two or three shillings a week; you had better wait till you are older." The boy looked very young, and had not even done growing. But he answered simply, "I do not want to bring her here, but I must get married, for my mother wants a daughter-in-law to wait upon her." So the lad

went into the country, got married, and left his bride to wait upon his mother in her village home. I do not think he saw her again for a year, at least.

Marriages often turn out very unhappily in China. Mothers-in-law are sometimes very hard and cruel, even beating their daughters-in-law. Quarrels, too, are frequent between the different daughters-in-law, especially when several of them have children, who run to their mothers telling tales of one another. The husband generally takes his mother's part, and if he hears her scolding his wife he may join in, and perhaps beat her for not being a good daughter. If he takes to gambling or opium-smoking, it is still worse. He will pawn the furniture and his wife's clothes and jewels, and sometimes end by selling the children and even the wife herself!

Wives cannot go to law against their husbands in China; almost their only resource is suicide. If they swallow poison or hang themselves, it will bring trouble on their husband's family. If heavy bribes are not paid, the wife's relations will threaten a law-suit; for if it can be shown that she was so cruelly treated that she was driven to commit suicide, her oppressors might be punished. Then, too, there is an idea that her ghost may take its revenge by haunting them.

So girls often say they are going to commit suicide, and then sometimes they are treated more kindly, for fear of their doing so. It is far too easy to get poison in China. Most rich families keep opium in their houses; the father or husband wants it for his pipe, or to offer to visitors. But even if there is none in the house, it is easily bought, so when the wretched girl wants to take her life she gets some of this opium. A small dose is enough; and, if no one knows that she has taken it, she will soon fall asleep and never wake again in this world. But if any one finds out that she has swallowed it, they are anxious to save her life.

I remember some years ago going to see a girl who had taken opium. A friend was living with us then who had a small dispensary half a mile from our house. It was for her help that the

girl's friends had come, but as it was after dark, I offered to go with her. We soon reached the little house. The young woman (I think she was eighteen) was sitting sullenly on a low stool, rocking her baby's cradle. She had had a quarrel with her mother-in-law, and no thought of her husband or child had kept her from swallowing a dose of opium. Happily we were in time. They were sensible people, who had hot water ready for us to mix with our mustard, and got us what we wanted, even catching one of the fowls that were running about the room, and pulling out a long feather, despite much cackling, when one was wanted to tickle the patient's throat! So the young woman was very sick, and her life was spared. One of her relations insisted on taking us home, carrying a small lantern at the end of a stick, though, as the full moon was shining brightly, we could have done without his kind offices! And as I walked home I thought how many suicides there must be every day in China. For the people there are heathen. They never think how awful it must be for a soul to appear, unsummoned, in the presence of the great Judge!

They just think of what they can see. They are very miserable here, so miserable that they want to get out of this world altogether, and so they swallow opium. They never read in the Bible about heaven and hell, and they know nothing about God's will being best, and how we ought to take patiently, as from Him, all that comes to us in life, even as the Lord Jesus did, when He spoke of the suffering brought about by Judas' treachery and the chief priests' malice, saying, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Christians live by faith, heathen by sight. Whenever we think and care more about what we can see—clothes, food, sweets, amusements—than we do about the unseen—God, heaven, goodness, truth—we are living more like heathen than like Christians. And that is the life which, when sorrow and disappointment come, leads to suicide.

CHAPTER IV

ENTERING THE DRAGON GATE

THE Chinese classics are very ancient. They have been studied for hundreds of years in all the schools of China, Japan, and Corea, and they are still studied to-day by tens of thousands of scholars, many of whom can repeat the whole of the four books and five classics by heart.

They barely escaped destruction, though, two thousand years ago, in the reign of the Emperor Tsin Chi. One day he gave a great feast in his palace, to which seventy learned men came to wish him long life and prosperity. There were other guests there too. One of these stood up and made a very complimentary speech, ending it with these words, "From most ancient times there has never been any one in awful virtue like your Majesty." The Emperor liked this flattery, but was not so well pleased when one of the great scholars gave him some good advice and warning, instead of praising him. So he asked the prime minister what he thought. And he replied: "Your Majesty has laid the foundation of Imperial sway, so that it will last for ten thousand years. This is indeed beyond what a stupid scholar can understand! They do not learn about modern things, but only talk of antiquity. I suggest that your Majesty put out an edict, saying that all their ancient books are to be burnt, and that those scholars who persist in quoting them shall be put to death. And if any do not give up and burn their books within thirty days they are to be branded with a red-hot iron, and sent for four years to the frontier to build the Great Wall. The only books that should be spared are those on medicine, divination, and husbandry."

The Emperor was delighted with this suggestion, and put out an edict accordingly. All the books that could be found were burnt, but two years afterwards it was discovered that many scholars were still talking about them and quoting them. So four hundred and sixty were buried alive in pits, while a great many were degraded and banished. The Emperor's eldest son remonstrated with him, but it did no good, the only result was that his father banished him to the Great Wall. Three years after the burning of the books the Emperor died, and eight years after his death a new dynasty commenced, and the scholars were once more in favour.

Copies of the classics that had been carefully hidden away were now brought forth from their hiding-places, while others were written out from memory by those who had learnt them by heart before the burning of the books.

So they were once more taught in all Chinese schools, as they have been ever since. Not that they are easy for children to understand! They are not even written in the language which they speak, but in an ancient, classical language which no one talks now-a-days. Little boys are not expected to understand what they learn until they have been some years at school, and then the teacher explains the books which they have already learnt by heart. It is as if little English boys were set down to learn by rote Latin books of which they could not understand a word! But Chinese boys are used to it, and spend nearly all their school-time in memory work. They do not begin by learning their alphabet, for there is no alphabet in China. Every word is like a new letter. Just as you could read 1, 2, 3, +, -, without spelling them, one, two, three, plus, minus, so Chinese children have to learn different symbols for some thousands of words, and the way in which they do it is by learning by heart, and gazing at the words as they learn them.

When a child first comes to school the teacher reads a line two or three times, the little pupil repeating it after him. Then the boy takes his book back to his seat and learns that line aloud, shouting

it out vigorously, quite regardless of the fact that the other twenty boys in the room are all shouting out different lessons at the top of their voices! After some hours the teacher will call him up to repeat what he has learnt. He must hold his book in both hands



"BACKING THE BOOK."

to present it to the teacher, and then turn his back to repeat his lesson!

When he has been longer at school he will learn more, and in course of time he will begin to learn to write. Copies are placed under thin paper for the pupil to trace. He rubs his Indian ink

on a little slab, dips his brush in it, and begins to write. After having traced the same words a great many times he will remember how to write them without a copy.

Then he may be promoted to essay-writing. Chinese compositions must be written according to regular rules, with many quotations from the classics.

Poems, too, have to be composed, the rhymes being learnt from a dictionary, for it does not do to go by one's ear in writing Chinese verse! All educated men in China can write poems, for this is part of the work for their examinations, and to pass examinations is the great ambition of scholars of all ages.

It is said that the great Emperor Shun, who lived B.C. 2200, examined his officers every three years, and either promoted or degraded them, according to their success or failure. But as we do not hear of there having been any books in his time, we do not know in what they were examined! A thousand years after this we are informed that all candidates for office were examined in music, archery, horsemanship, writing, arithmetic, and the rules of propriety. About the time of the Christian era we find that they were examined, not only in these six subjects, but also in law, agriculture, geography, and military tactics. The candidates must bear good characters, too, for filial piety and honesty.

But for the last thirteen hundred years there have been different examinations for soldiers and for literary men. These latter are examined nearly entirely in the classics, about which they have to write essays and verses, and it is by passing in these subjects that men enter Government service in China. It is said that the poorest lad in the Empire can in this way rise to almost the highest position in the land. But as a matter of fact, both education and going up for examinations cost money; sometimes, too, bribes have to be given before the competitor can obtain his degree. It is not only boys and young men who go in for examinations in China; such a small number of those who compete are allowed to pass that many go in again and again, until they are old and grey-headed. I have heard of honorary

degrees being bestowed on old men of eighty, who had gone in regularly for the same examinations ever since they were boys!

District examinations are first held all over the country. If two thousand go in for these in a certain district, perhaps *fourteen* will



MUSIC FOR THE MILLION.

be allowed to pass! Their names are posted up in the magistrate's hall, and this honour is called "having a name in the village." These successful candidates go up from their country homes to a central

town, where the next examination is held. Here, too, only some fifteen, or at most twenty, pass out of nearly two thousand! The names of the successful students are posted up on the walls of the office. This is called "having a name in the department."

Only these are allowed to compete at the yearly examinations which are held in the district cities, such as Hanyang and Hiaokan. About two thousand students go in for these at each centre. They are shut up in tiny cells, very much like pigstyes, with just a board to sit on and another for a table. There are long rows of these cells; each student has one to himself, where he is shut up for a day and a night; the doors are sealed, and sentences from the classics are given him, on which he must write essays or verses. Questions are also asked, answers to which involve a knowledge of the classics. The examiner and his assistants look through all their papers and pick out twenty or more which they consider the best. The authors of these are said to have passed, while one thousand nine hundred and eighty have failed, and must try again next year! Those who pass gain the degree of "Budding Genius," which is sometimes spoken of by Englishmen as B.A.

There are no prizes, but the honour of passing is considered great, and there are certain privileges attached to it, such as not being liable to be beaten by order of the magistrate. Once in three years these "Budding Geniuses" go to the provincial capital for another examination. Wuchang is crowded with students on these occasions. About ten thousand come up from all parts of the province, but only some eighty, or at most a hundred, can pass, however well the other students write their essays and verses.

This examination is very hard work. For three days and nights the candidates sit, each in his tiny cell; many of them are so engrossed with their papers that they do not even try to sleep. The cells are not long enough to lie down in, but some curl round as best they can in the limited space at their disposal and try to get some rest. After three days they are let out for a few hours, of course giving up their papers first; then they go in for another three days' work, and, after a

second short relaxation, they enter the cells for the third and last time. After three more days they are finally released. The doors are unlocked, and the seals broken, three salutes are fired from old cannon at the gates, drums are beaten, and the bagpipes sound, all to honour the outcoming students.

This is a fine opportunity for mission work. As the weary students leave the hall a band of English and native helpers are waiting for them at the gates with packets of Christian books, neatly done up in red paper. These they put into the hands of the students, who are usually glad to receive them, and in this way a knowledge of Christian truth is carried to all parts of the province; and the province of Hupeh, you must remember, is a good deal larger than England and Wales! The Chinese reverence books and rarely destroy them; and as those who receive these packets are all scholars, they are often interested in reading books that are entirely new to them, and no doubt many of them lend these Gospels and tracts to their friends in distant towns and villages. I will give you an account of one of these distributions of books in a later chapter about mission work.

When the students leave their cells the officials remain in the hall to look over the papers. These are all copied out by clerks before the examiner sees them. This is to prevent his recognising the handwriting or secret marks of any who may have wished to bribe him. But still there are ways in which money can be used, and I have heard it said that it is difficult to get essays correctly copied unless the writers are given what they consider a sufficient present!

When the list of successful students is made out it is posted up on the Drum Tower for all in the neighbourhood to read it. Clerks make haste to write out the names and positions of those who have done best, each on a large sheet of red paper. These they take, or send, to the homes of the successful students, knowing that the bearer of such good news will be handsomely rewarded.

The graduate is a proud and happy man. He may wear a gilt button on his cap, erect two high poles in front of his gate, and place

a tablet over his door to inform all who pass by that a "Promoted Scholar" lives there !

The English degree most like that of "Promoted Scholar" is M.A.

A few days after receiving the longed-for news of their son's success his parents give a feast in his honour. Invitations are sent out requesting friends to "shed their light" at the banquet. Each guest brings with him a present of money. This they call "congratulatory politeness." The graduate then worships heaven and earth, the ancestral tablet and his parents, bowing his head to the ground three times before each. Then his mother, or his mother-in-law, adorns him with the red silk scarf, which only those who have taken their degree may wear. She places it over one shoulder, crossing it once over his breast if he is a "Budding Genius," and twice if he is a "Promoted Scholar," and then tying it round his waist like a sash.

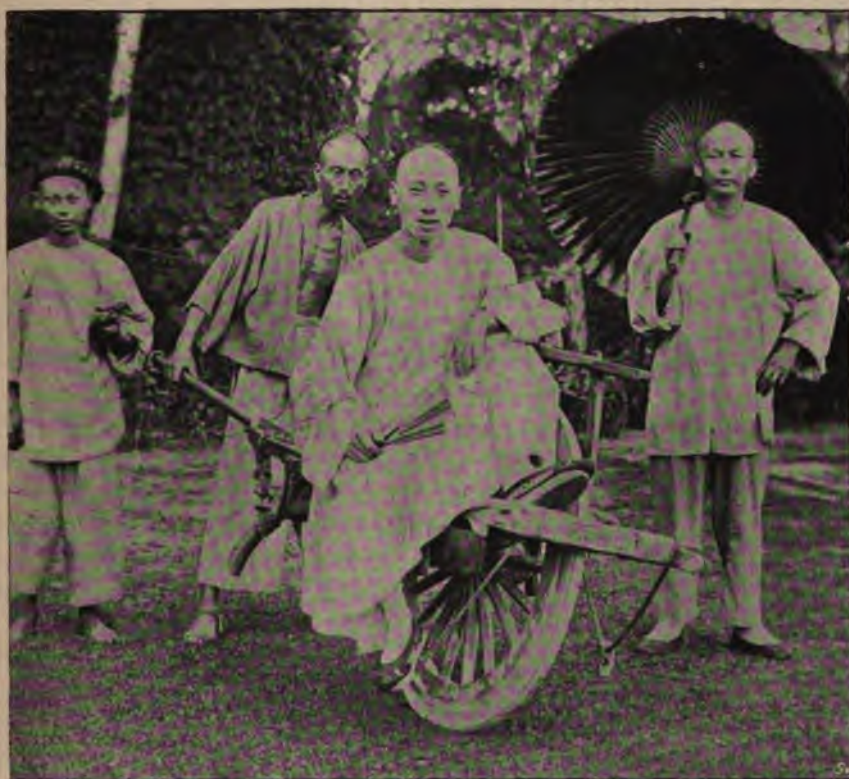
Not long after this he must pay ceremonial visits to certain officials and to his teachers, and then to various relations and friends. He wears a long robe of light-blue silk under his crimson sash, and rides in a grand sedan-chair. Two men walk before him carrying red silk banners mounted on golden bamboos, which have been presented to the happy scholar. A band of eight musicians also walk before his chair, making a noise which the Chinese call music. One or two servants follow, with a number of red visiting cards.

These formal calls take two or three days, though the graduate seldom stays long enough to sit down, merely bowing or kneeling in each house and then going on to the next.

The Chinese count it a high honour to have a "Promoted Scholar" in their family, but he has not yet got an official position, and has still another examination before him.

For this he has to go to Peking. It is a long, expensive journey for scholars from the south and west of the Empire. About three in every hundred of those who go up pass this examination, and are then called "Fit for office." Those who fail have to wait three years before they can try again. The successful candidates draw lots for the post of magistrate and at last become mandarins !

All who have passed go in for yet one more examination. This is a high honour; only two or three hundred compete for this, the highest degree in the land. The Emperor himself is present. About twenty are allowed to pass, and these are called members of the "Forest of



A CHINESE WHEELBARROW.

Pencils"! Some of these become Court poets and historians, others are sent out as literary chancellors and examiners all over the Empire.

But many men grow old before they win these honours. I have

read of a "Budding Genius" going in for his next examination again and again, until at the age of eighty-three he became a "Promoted Scholar."

But the prolonged examinations are a great strain upon old or feeble men, cooped up in tiny rooms, with no conveniences or comforts; they often fall ill, and it is not an uncommon thing for a student to die in his cell. The great gates may not be opened for his corpse to be removed, that would be very unlucky, but it may be carried out over the side or back wall of the enclosure.

There is a daily allowance of boiled rice and half a pound of meat for all who wish for it. But the food given is so very poor that all who can afford it bring their own. Servants are in readiness to cook it for them; six or eight hundred men are provided by Government to wait upon the students, bring water and cook for them. Of course their baskets of food are searched, and so are the students themselves and all their baggage, lest they should smuggle a copy of the classics, or another man's essays, into their cells. If such are found, the owner of them might be dismissed from the hall and not allowed to compete that year. Still, pocket editions of the classics are printed for this very purpose, some so small that the words are hardly legible. Students sometimes keep them up their sleeves (which are often used as pockets in China), and manage to evade the searchers' vigilance. Perhaps money is used in these cases, for a gift blindeth the eyes in all Eastern lands.

Degrees are sometimes openly bought from the Government. This is not bribery, but a recognised way of obtaining literary standing. Every one knows that the graduate has not passed the examination, but still the diploma gives him a certain position, and also enables him to go in for a higher examination without having passed the previous one. The price of a degree varies from £5 to £100. When the Government is badly in want of money the price is lowered, to encourage more students to become purchasers.

I will translate for you a model letter to a friend who has purchased a degree:—"You with your golden bamboo banners and

jewelled cap have been chosen as one attaining the standard required. Truly your fame is as the Milky Way, as the lofty pines! Who does not long for you? This degree is only a small thing for you to have got; you will soon have a ladder to the clouds, and step up to the moon! Your servant stretches his neck expectantly, and waits for that happy day!" The answer to which is as follows:—"Your servant with broken-down horses and an inferior carriage improperly got his name put upon the list of graduates. I have been very much ridiculed because of the empty seat to the left" (the seat of honour, which purchasers of degrees may not occupy). "How dare I talk of becoming a great light in the kingdom for men to look to? Your praises exceed the facts of the case; they make my face perspire the more!"

Here is another model letter to be written to a friend on his becoming a "Promoted Scholar":—"In the examination hall you were like a general who could fly. Wherever the point of your pencil turned a thousand armies were swept away. At the news of your success I jumped for excessive joy, like a sparrow! Now you will get your wish: you will feel the Spring winds in Peking, and, riding on your old horse, you will ere long see the flowers. I respectfully wait for that time." To which the following is the correct answer:—"I am feeble-minded and of common material. Luckily I obtained the recommendation of my fellow-villagers. I am really ashamed that my name should disgrace the list of worthies! Why should presents be sent to me? But if I refuse them I fear I shall violate the laws of respectful politeness. I reverently bow receiving your congratulations, and will ever remember your illustrious virtue."

Besides the literary examinations, there are regular competitive examinations for candidates for military honours. For several hundred years these have been conducted in the same way. First the candidates have to shoot with bows and arrows; next, while on horseback, they have to shoot at a mark while the horse is running. Then they have to brandish heavy swords, weighing, it is said, from

a hundred to a hundred and eighty pounds. Brandishing weapons is what the Chinese excel in, putting themselves into wonderful postures, and looking as fierce as possible, as though they wished to strike terror into the hearts of their enemies! After this performance they have to throw great stones from a hundred to a hundred and sixty pounds in weight. Then they have to bend very stiff bows.

For the third degree the candidate must go to Peking. Those who succeed there are sure of employment in the army or navy.

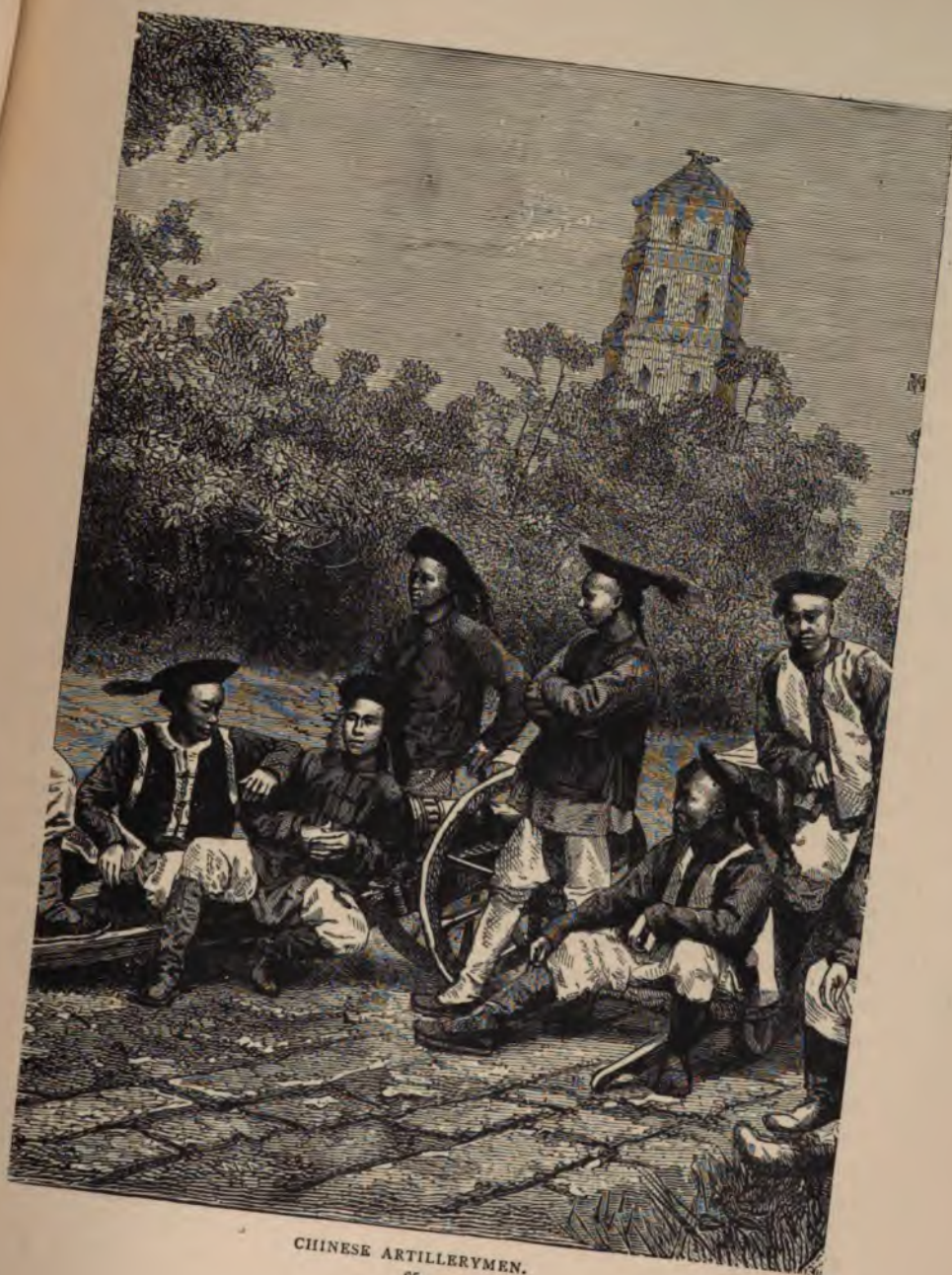
For the fourth degree they have to write essays on military tactics and naval defences. The three whose names head the list of successful candidates in this examination are mounted on horseback and paraded for three days round the capital with great state.

But during the last few years the Chinese Government has established several military and naval academies, with European professors, who teach the cadets under them the methods of modern warfare.

At last China is moving. Slowly but surely the leaders of that great country are taking in European ideas. There are arsenals now, where they can cast guns and cannon; and before the Japanese war in 1896 the Chinese had a very good fleet of modern gunboats and torpedo-boats. Many of these were taken by the Japanese, but the Chinese have given orders for new boats, and will soon have as good a fleet as ever. What they need most are brave, courageous men to take charge of them.

Besides these foreign gunboats, there are a number of old-fashioned war-junks. There are said to be fifteen hundred on the Yangtse alone. Each boat has about fourteen men on board, and some very ancient fire-arms. The chief use of these boats is to clear the river of pirates, and to escort officials and fire salutes for them.

When we are near the river we often see a group of soldiers and hear guns firing, and on asking the reason, are usually told that



CHINESE ARTILLERYMEN.

some "great man" is arriving or departing. All officials are spoken of as "great men" in China.

But, as the gunboats prove, Western ideas are being introduced into the Middle Kingdom, and not only her soldiers, but her scholars, are gradually, very gradually, coming under their influence.

Of late years a question involving some knowledge of mathematics has occasionally been introduced into the examination papers, and last year the candidates at one centre were surprised by being confronted with a question as to how the world was peopled after the Flood! But as long as the examiners themselves are ignorant of everything but the Chinese classics they naturally will not wish to introduce scientific and mathematical questions into the examination papers! Still, the desire for Western learning is steadily growing, and there is a large and increasing number of students in mission high schools and colleges who will be powerful agents in widening Chinese thought in years to come.

But the vast majority of the people of China have not been touched yet by Western ideas. Glance at the signboards hanging outside the shops of any town in the Empire. They are as Eastern as ever! Large gold letters on upright black boards inform us that this is the "Garden of Perpetual Spring," that shop sells preserved vegetables! Here the "Abundant Fountain" tells us that firewood and coals are for sale! At the "Saloon for Getting Drunk by Moonlight" you can buy the flesh of black cats! "The Commencement of Peace" is a dye-shop! "Universal Pleasure" lets out sedan-chairs and coloured lamps on hire! "Great Prosperity" makes cotton quilts and mends old clothes! "Extensive Brilliancy" is an ironmonger's! "Great Peace" buys or exchanges jewellery! "Harmonious Prosperity" is an opium shop! "Long Life" is the place at which to buy coffins!

High-sounding words are used, too, in ordinary conversation by educated people in China. You do not ask a man his name, but his "honourable surname." He replies that his "mean surname" is So-and-so. You ask after his excellent son. He answers that "the

young dog is very well." For you must always speak humbly of yourself and of anything belonging to you. When you ask his "exalted age," he may answer that he has lived in vain for forty years, but he is more likely to give you the cycle of his birth. When we talk of cycles in China we do not mean bicycles! The "cycle of Cathay" is a period of sixty years. An ancient emperor is said to have invented it, B.C. 2637, and all dates have been reckoned by it there ever since.

There are two sets of Chinese characters, ten "heavenly stems" and twelve "earthly branches." The first of these stems is written by the first of the branches, and together they denote the first year of the cycle; the second stem and the second branch denote the second year, and so on, till after sixty years the first stem and the first branch come together again, and a new cycle has begun. It is a very clumsy way of reckoning, for you must know in which cycle each date occurred. So that instead of saying that Confucius was born B.C. 551, they have to say he was born in the year *keng yin*, in the reign of King Ling, of the Cheu dynasty.

But a more amusing way of asking people their age is to enquire, "What do you belong to?" And they answer, "The ox," or "The dragon," or some other animal! For each of the "earthly branches" is under a particular animal. So, hearing the animal, the Chinese know the branch, and can calculate the age of the person "belonging" to it.

I expect the boys and girls who read this would like to know the animals to which they would be said to belong in China.

Those born in 1880 are under the Dragon.

"	"	"	1881	"	"	"	Snake.
"	"	"	1882	"	"	"	Horse.
"	"	"	1883	"	"	"	Sheep.
"	"	"	1884	"	"	"	Monkey.
"	"	"	1885	"	"	"	Cock.
"	"	"	1886	"	"	"	Dog.

Those born in 1887 are under the Pig.

"	"	"	1888	"	"	"	Rat.
"	"	"	1889	"	"	"	Ox.
"	"	"	1890	"	"	"	Tiger.
"	"	"	1891	"	"	"	Hare.
"	"	"	1892	"	"	"	Dragon.

And so the twelve animals are repeated over and over again. You see that those born in 1892 are under the same animal as those born in 1880, but you are supposed to be able to guess any one's age within twelve years, so that, hearing the animal to which they belong, you may know how old they are.

The Chinese believe that the animal under which a child is born exercises some kind of influence on his life, so fortune-tellers always want to know the date of his birth before answering questions as to his future. They sometimes say that a certain animal is to be feared or avoided at the time of some wedding or funeral. This means that those born under that animal are not to be present at it.

But it is not only in asking about people's names and ages that the Chinese use round-about terms, there are polite or poetic expressions for most things that are not easily understood by English students of the language. How should we know that "longevity boards" mean coffins, that "foreign dirt" is opium, that the "dragon gate" means the examination hall in Peking, or that "field chickens" are frogs? It is rather puzzling, too, to read at the end of a letter some such sentence as this, "I have not sought for a fish or a wild goose to ask after your Honour's happiness." On inquiry you find that some letters in ancient times are said to have been carried to their destinations by fish and geese!

"I have not had leisure to prepare paper" seems a strange excuse for not writing sooner in a land where paper is plentiful and cheap!

It is the correct thing in writing to a stranger to tell him that his fame is "as high as the mountains and as the Great Bear"!

On cloudless summer nights they write, "The Palace of the Toad is bright and glorious, the Cave of the Rabbit wafts fragrance to the earth." Both "the Palace of the Toad" and the "Cave of the Rabbit" mean the moon, and it is supposed that fragrance from the cinnamon trees that grow there sometimes reaches the earth!

Chinese scholars are an imaginative race, but we hope as the influence of Christianity spreads over the land some of their very exaggerated phrases will be modified, and that truth will come to be regarded as of at least as much importance as an elegant style.



SMOKING OPIUM.

CHAPTER V

STRANGE EXAMPLES OF FILIAL PIETY

A FEW years ago one of our servants came to ask me if she might have a short holiday, as she wished to go into the country to see her mother-in-law. She had bought a present which she wished to take to her.

"What are you going to give her?" I asked, and was rather surprised when she replied,—

"A coffin. I have been saving up for years, and have just got enough money to buy a really good one."

Of course, I let her go. She hired coolies to carry the heavy, cumbrous Chinese coffin to a boat, and sailed across the plain to her mother-in-law's village.

On her return I asked, "Well, how did your mother-in-law like your present?"

She smiled contentedly as she answered: "Very much indeed. She will keep the coffin under her bed till she needs it."

So there it remained till a few years afterwards, when the old woman died, and then, of course, she was buried in it. Now this was the act of a very filial daughter-in-law, and would be much admired by all her friends and relations. Her husband was dead, and she feared that when her widowed mother-in-law died the family might not be able to afford a proper funeral, so she prepared for it in this way, and comforted the declining years of her old mother-in-law with the thought that she was at least sure of a good coffin when she died!

But children are not always good to their parents even in China.

I remember one wretched opium-smoker whose mother came to me in great trouble one day, saying that her son had pawned her coffin! She was a poor old widow, but, knowing her son's bad habits, she had saved up all she could, and had bought a coffin, as she feared he would not provide her with a decent funeral when she died. And, after all, one day when she was out, this wretched man had come



BOATS OUTSIDE THE CITY GATE.

in and had taken the coffin away out of her bedroom, and she had no money to get it out of pawn. I tried to comfort her by reminding her that the soul mattered more than the body, and that, if she went to heaven when she died, it did not very much matter in what sort of a coffin her body was buried. But what seemed to bring her most comfort was the assurance that, as she had been a Christian

for many years, the Church would see that she had a suitable funeral when she needed it.

Such conduct as that of her son is not common, I hope; still, though there is a great deal of talk about filial piety in China, I am afraid many children do behave very badly to their parents. It is not for want of teaching. In no other country in the world has there been so much said about the duty of obedience to parents, nor have so many books been written about it in any other language.

I was reading lately a translation from an article in a Chinese newspaper about a very good son. This is what it says: "On November 26th, 1897, a young man, eighteen years old, was executed at Canton on the charge of murder. The execution ground was crowded, and much sympathy was felt for the condemned; for it was well known that he was innocent, the actual murderer being the young man's father. In order to save his parent and satisfy the law, which always demands life for life, young Shu gave himself up as soon as he knew that his father had done the deed; he confessed to having committed the murder himself! As the saying puts it, 'He sealed his filial piety with his blood.' The affair will be recorded in the history of the town as proof of the lengths to which true filial piety will go."

But though extreme cases of this sort are rare, yet instances of a son's devotion to his parents are very common. I have often seen a man carrying his old mother pick-a-back through the streets, the white-haired woman begging as they went. I suppose the filial conduct of the son and the feebleness of the old mother both touch people's hearts, and they get a good many cash given them.

It is no uncommon thing either, while sitting with the patients in the dispensary, to see a woman carried in on her son's back and deposited on a bench, there to await the arrival of the doctor. No one laughs at the sight, as I think they would in England.

But many of the stories told to Chinese children about ancient examples of filial piety are very absurd. I will quote a few of

them for you, not because I believe them all, but to show the sort of moral teaching given to boys and girls in China:—

“Ko Ku was very poor. He had one child three years old; such was his poverty that his mother usually divided her portion of food with this little grandchild. Ko said to his wife: ‘We are so poor that our mother has not enough to eat, for she gives some of her portion to the child. If the child were dead, there would be more food for her. Let us bury this child! We may have another some day, but a mother once gone will never return.’

“His wife did not dare to make any objection. So he dug a deep hole to bury their living child; suddenly however he discovered a pot of gold in the hole, and on it he read these words: ‘Heaven bestows this treasure upon Ko Ku, the dutiful son. The magistrate may not seize it, nor shall the neighbours take it from him.’”

The Chinese would think it quite right of a father to kill his son if by so doing he could prolong the life of his parents.

Next I will give you a touching story of a little boy's devotion to his parents: “Wu Mang was only eight years old. The family were so poor that they had no mosquito nets to their beds. In summer there were a great many mosquitos; every night they came and kept Mang's parents awake with their bites. So Mang decided to save his parents as much as he could. He went to bed early, and would not fan or drive the mosquitos away, hoping that they would be satisfied with sucking his blood, and would let his father and mother sleep in peace.”

These stories are extracts from a Chinese book called *Twenty-four Cases of Filial Piety*. I will not give the others at length. One is about a son who sold himself to be a slave that he might have money enough to bury his father. Another tells how a lad of fourteen saw his father attacked by a tiger. The boy rushed to the rescue and saved his father's life. But most of the stories are very silly, and some quite impossible.

The Chinese say that filial piety is the chief of all the virtues,

and I am sorry to have to add that they sometimes praise children for telling lies if their parents would suffer by their speaking the truth.

Here is an example of that. A wife stole her husband's money. Her stepson wished to shield her from blame, so on six different occasions he told his father that it was he who had taken the money. His father scolded and beat him severely each time. When his stepmother for the seventh time stole money out of the box he gently admonished her, and she was so touched by his filial conduct that she instantly reformed. Of course, the Chinese praise that lad for confessing sins which he had never committed, because he did it for his stepmother's sake.

Now I will turn from these old stories to tell you of something which I know is true, and which happened not many years ago. It is about a woman named Tak Chan. One day she came to see Miss Davies in Hong-Kong, and told her about her past life. Pushing back her sleeves, she showed terrible scars on both her arms, and said: "Years ago my mother-in-law fell ill, and they said it was because of some evil influence I had brought to the house. I went to the temples to make offerings and to pray, but she only grew worse. Then I consulted a sorceress, and she told me that the only means that could restore my mother-in-law to health were to make soup out of my own flesh and give it her to drink. So I cut some flesh from my arms and made the soup. My mother-in-law drank two bowls of it, but even that did not save her, and she died." The unhappy daughter-in-law thought this was because of *her* sin, and she tried to make merit enough to have it all forgiven. After weary years of heathen services, and efforts to propitiate the gods, she at last heard the Gospel story, and found peace in believing in the Saviour, who died to put away sin.

That happened in South China, but similar cases are often occurring all over the Empire. Sometimes it is a daughter and sometimes a son's wife who thus makes soup for the sick mother out of her own flesh. The doctor, priest, or sorceress has said that it is the only thing likely to do the patient any good, and, of

course, if the woman recovers, as she sometimes does, her recovery is put down to the filial act of her daughter or daughter-in-law. I believe they are always willing victims, and, of course, their merit is considered great.

Do we always show as great devotion to our Father Who is in heaven?

Filial piety in China is shown not only to parents, but to grandparents. In the ready letter-writer from which I have already quoted there is a touching letter congratulating a man on the anniversary of his grandmother's birthday! That letter would be taken quite seriously in China—no one would think of suggesting that it had been written in fun. As the grandparents grow older their birthdays are increasingly festive occasions, a greater number of presents are sent, and large parties are given, with much mirth and feasting.

Chinese law is very severe on unfilial children; it orders "that any one who is guilty of addressing abusive language to his or her father or mother, or father's parents, or a wife who rails at her husband's parents or grandparents, shall be strangled; provided always that the persons so abused themselves complain to the magistrates, and had personally heard the language addressed to them."

It is not only while parents and grandparents are alive that affection and regard for them must be shown. When they are dead it is still more important from a Chinese point of view, for the happiness of the departed is supposed to largely depend on the worship of their descendants. It is very desirable that the members of a family should all be present at the moment of the death of its head. Sons, daughters, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, brothers and sisters should all gather round the bedside. As soon as the dying man draws his last breath all these break out into a loud and pitiful wail. I know of no sadder sound than the mournful wail of those whose best-beloved has just gone from them, out into the unknown darkness, where they have no hope of ever meeting

him again. All beyond death is dark, so dark to them. They light two candles placed on a chair by the side of the bed; these are supposed to light the spirit of the dead on its way after it has left the body! Is it not pitiful that they should think that wax candles can show the way to heaven? "How great is that darkness!"

After a time the melancholy wailing ends in broken sobs. The dead man is dressed in as expensive clothes as the family can afford; perhaps they put on him five pairs of trousers and seven jackets, some of fine cotton, others of silk. Then the eldest son kneels reverently, and offers the dead man a cup of wine and some rice. All the other members of the family kneel down at the same time and wail. Then a small sedan-chair and four chair-bearers, all made of bamboo and paper, are bought. Cups of wine and cakes are put before each of these paper men. When all is ready these models are burnt, while priests chant prayers and clap cymbals noisily. Fire is supposed to turn the paper sedan into a spirit-chair, in which the soul of the departed may ride to the world of shadows. Sometimes a fifth man and a paper umbrella are also burnt, that the dead man may ride in state, preceded, like an official, by a red umbrella.

All the children and grandchildren gather round to watch while the body is placed in the coffin, and then again they break out into loud cries and wailing. Candles and incense are burnt all the time. Then a gaudily painted picture of the dead man is hung on a white screen, and a bowl of incense is put on a table in front of it. This is kept burning for forty-nine days and nights. Two candles, a bowl, a cup, and a pair of chopsticks are also placed on the table, for the use of the departed's spirit at meal-times, when three bowls of food are placed before them. The eldest son kneels before the table, making three solemn bows towards the ground, crying and wailing; then his brothers come forward and do the same.

Filial piety demands that the eldest son, at least, should sleep at night by the side of the coffin, until it is removed for burial. I remember once visiting what is called "The City of the Dead"

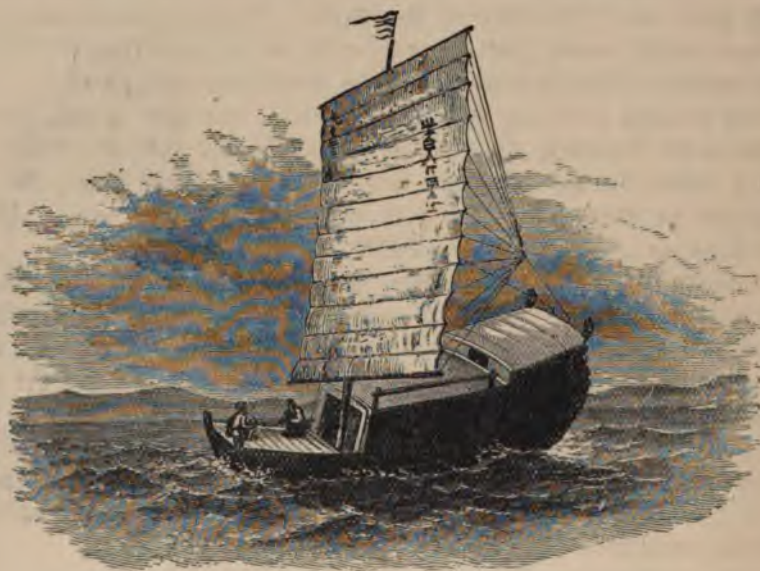
in Canton. It is a large building, or rather rows of buildings, divided into a number of tiny rooms, in which people keep the coffins of their dead relations till a lucky day comes on which to take them to their ancestral home for burial. Sometimes this home is so far away that to get to it involves a long and tedious journey, which for some months, or even years, it is not convenient to take. They do not like to keep the coffin in the house all this time, so those who can afford it rent a room for their dead relation in some such place as "The City of the Dead." Chinese coffins are made of very thick wood, and are sealed up so tightly that they can be kept unburied for months, and even sometimes for years.

On looking into one of the small cells we saw a lad, perhaps thirteen or fourteen, keeping watch over his father's coffin. On being asked, he said that he had been there some time; he slept at night on the floor of the cell, by the side of the coffin. He did not seem at all nervous or afraid.

One of the duties of a dutiful son is to see that the long incense stick is never allowed to go out. Every morning for forty-nine days, and sometimes longer, the children bring hot water in a basin, as if the dead man wanted to wash his face and hands. At meal-times, before they begin to eat, they bring bowls of rice and vegetables, and place them on the table before their father's picture. They weep and burn incense, and then take away the food and eat their own meal. Every evening they come and tell the spirit of the departed that they are going to bed.

After awhile friends and relations pay visits of sympathy. They kneel down before the picture of the dead man, and one of the sons always kneels beside them. While they are bowing before it, the wife or daughter who is sitting behind the white screen breaks out into piteous and violent weeping. This is a necessary part of the proceedings, whether sorrow is really felt or no. When the visitors have finished paying their respects before the picture this mourner comes out from behind the screen to thank them for their sympathy.

Seven days after the death a number of invited guests are expected to be present at the time of offering sacrifices to the spirit of the departed. On the fourteenth day there is another ceremony; at this they pray Buddha to ferry the soul of the dead man into Paradise. A feast is given on the twenty-first day, at which the sons and grandsons thank the guests for their kindness and practical sympathy. Thanks are expressed not so much by words as



BOAT ON THE YANGTSE.

by deeds—kneeling and knocking their heads on the floor three times in front of their visitors.

There are other ceremonies every week till the forty-ninth day. After this they do not offer food regularly at meal-times to the dead, though on certain feast days and other occasions offerings are still made.

But I have not told you about the funeral yet. That sometimes

takes place a few days after death, and sometimes not for months or years. Chinese coffins are very heavy, but, as there are no hearses, they are carried by men. The coffin is slung on bamboos, which eight or more coolies carry on their shoulders. If the distance is long, they often manage to take it most of the way by boat. We frequently meet boats on the Han and the Yangtse with coffins on board. Sometimes a white cock sits on the coffin, being tied to it by its feet. The cock must be white, for that is the colour of mourning. All the relations put on unbleached calico garments for the funeral. These are roughly tacked together, and not even hemmed. They tie long strips of this calico round their heads, and even cover their shoes with it. They wear their hair in a very untidy state. This utter disregard for personal appearance certainly looks more like mourning than expensive silk and crape, which seem to take up a good deal of the thoughts of some English mourners. Friends who go to the funeral are each provided with a strip of calico as a badge of mourning. This they hold up to their eyes, as if they were weeping. The sons and grandsons of the dead man always follow the coffin on foot; the women mourners may ride in chairs, but they are supposed to keep up a pitiful wailing all the way.

A quantity of paper money is provided for the funeral. I do not mean bank-notes or postal orders, but sham money. The better kind is made of tinfoil pasted on paper. This represents silver; but sometimes it is painted yellow, and then represents gold. The cheaper kind is a sheet of coarse paper with round holes cut in it to represent cash. Perhaps you wonder what money of this kind can be used for? It is only made to be burnt. The idea is that it then becomes spirit money, and can be used by spirits in the unseen world. Some of this is scattered along the road at a funeral, to bribe the devils to let the coffin pass without hurting any one.

When the procession reaches the grave they wait for the hour fixed by the fortune-teller before lowering the coffin into it. As

soon as the grave is filled up with earth an offering is made to the dead man—rice, meat, and cakes are placed on the ground, incense and candles are lighted, and a quantity of paper money is burnt for his use in the spirit-world. The tablet on which the name of the dead man has been written is then placed in front of the grave. The mourners all kneel while the eldest son solemnly says, "Let the bones and flesh return to the earth, and the spirit enter the tablet." It then becomes an ancestral tablet. The eldest son carefully takes it home after the funeral, and it is kept in a place of honour for five generations. At the end of a year the grandchildren go out of mourning—that is, they no longer wear white threads plaited in with their hair and white top-knots on their caps. After twenty-seven months, which the Chinese call three years, all the family go out of deep mourning; now they wear blue in their hair and on their hats, for blue is slight mourning in China.

Weeping and wailing, they kneel down, and offer food before the dead man's picture, then they take off their badges of mourning and burn them all. After this, if it has not been done before, they take away the picture and the table and screen, and put the ancestral tablet in its niche, and after that they worship and make offerings before the tablet, and not before the picture. This tablet is of carved wood, about nine inches long, and three or four wide; it is often gilded. It belongs to the eldest son, and after his death it will be handed on to his eldest son. There is another ancestral tablet, on which are written, not only the name of the father, but of the grandfather, great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather, and sometimes of the great-great-great-grandfather too.

Dutiful sons worship before these tablets very regularly. On the first and fifteenth days of each month they light candles and incense before them, and on certain other festivals they invite their dead ancestors to pay them a visit. They light lamps before the tablets, and place a bowl of rice and a bowl of vegetables before each; then, bowing low, they say, "Please, Ancestors, come and eat of your

descendants' rice!" After a little while they take the food away and eat it themselves.

I knew a little girl who was invited to a feast by some heathen friends. Her name was Bright Orchid. She was a Christian child; her parents had taught her from babyhood to worship God, and she knew very little of heathen customs. So when she heard those friends say, "Please, Ancestors, come and eat of your descendants' rice!" she said, "Say it a little louder, please." And when they repeated, "Please, Ancestors, come and eat of your descendants' rice!" she said, "I don't understand this!" She was but a child, but she knew that they were giving to dead men the worship that should be given to God alone; so she refused to sit down to the feast, or to touch the food that had been offered before the ancestral tablet.

Families who can afford it have an ancestral hall, in which larger tablets are placed, and at stated times all the clan meet there and worship the spirits of their ancestors.



CHINESE TABLET.

There are usually fields belonging to the hall; the money derived from them is spent on sacrifices and other necessary expenses.

There are a great many other ceremonies besides those which I have described; for instance, there is the feast of Pure Brightness. This occurs at the beginning of April, and is one of the most important of all Chinese festivals. At that time every Chinaman who can possibly do so visits the graves of his ancestors and relations. The time for repairing and decorating the ancestral tombs is supposed to last a whole month; but, of course, very few spend so long over the business. All the members of each family, male and female, are expected to visit the graves, where they worship their ancestors, and make offerings of candles, incense, and food, after which they feast together in some small temple near the spot.

The graves are decorated with long streamers of tough white paper tied to bamboos, and stuck on the mounds. This is a sign to all who may pass that way that the graves are not neglected, but have been visited and repaired by filial descendants.

There is a similar feast in the autumn, with slightly different observances. The names of the ancestors are written on pieces of paper. These are taken to the graves if possible; if not, then to the riverside, or on to a hill, and there burnt, with a quantity of paper money. The worshippers say, "Get the money. Go away slowly. We have failed in due respect." These two last phrases are the ordinary way of saying "Good-bye" in China. I suppose the spirits are expected to take the money and go away. Those who can afford it burn a number of paper things at this festival—rooms, furniture, boxes, clothes, horses, chairs, boats, and servants, so that a great deal of money is often spent over worshipping at the graves.

Some of the tombs themselves are very expensive, but poorer people are content with a large grass-grown mound and a headstone. They do not generally bury in cemeteries, but all over the hills.

The only country walk that we have near Hankow is all among

the graves! We take a boat and cross to Hanyang, and then go up the Tortoise Hill. It is very nice to get up high again, for all Hankow is as flat as a pancake. But the hillside is just like a cemetery, and the wild flowers grow among the tombs. If we want a longer walk, we go to the end of the Tortoise Hill and cross the Moon Lake, and there is another little hill still more in the country; but on every side as far as the eye can reach it seems to be one vast graveyard! The Chinese have buried their dead here for thousands of years, one generation after another going down to the grave in the sad darkness of heathenism.

And often in our walks on the hillside we hear their hopeless wailing, and watch little groups as they burn their paper offerings at the graves of the departed.

You can easily understand that it is not an easy thing to be filial in a land where even death does not set a son free from the law of his father, but only makes the sacrifices demanded the greater.

Of course when people are poor they have to be content to do things more cheaply, but most men would rather spend their last cash, and go deeply into debt, than seem to slight their father's memory by buying a cheap coffin and burying him at once with as little ceremony as possible.

You see how much the Chinese wish for proper funerals. I am afraid they think more of the body than of the soul. Dr. John once asked an old woman in the country whether she was prepared to die. She promptly answered, "Yes; the wood is good!" She meant that her coffin, made of good thick wood, was ready for her when she should die, so she was not afraid of death! We read in the Bible, "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment." Is it not terribly sad that the last thoughts of so many of the Chinese should be about their coffins and funerals? Christ has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel; but the heathen do not know it. They are dying, hundreds of them, every day in the darkness, because

we Christians have not given them the light which has been entrusted to us to hand on to those in the uttermost parts of the earth!



GRAVE OF CONFUCIUS.

CHAPTER VI

SUPERSTITIONS, CHARMS, AND OMENS

WHEN the astronomers in Peking have calculated that an eclipse of the sun will happen shortly they inform the Board of Rites of the exact time at which it will take place. These send word to the Viceroy, or Governors, of the eighteen provinces, and they tell the other officials throughout the Empire. All are told to take the proper precautions, and to save the sun!

Perhaps you wonder how this can be done. But then you do not know that a Heavenly Dog is the cause of the eclipse! and that if this terrible monster cannot be frightened away in time, it may wholly devour the sun; so, of course, it is very important to scare away the animal before the mischief is done!

On the day before the eclipse, a notice is put up outside each of the mandarin's offices, telling the people of the danger to which the sun will be exposed. The officials then call in Taoist priests, a table is put out in the courtyard, on it are two red candles and a censer full of incense. As soon as the eclipse begins the candles are lighted, and the mandarin comes out, dressed in his official robes. He kneels down three times, knocking his head on the ground nine times. A number of large gongs and drums are then beaten loudly; these are intended to frighten away the Heavenly Dog! The priests march slowly round the table, reciting charms till the eclipse is over.

It is not only the officials who take these precautions; sailors on board the junks beat gongs in a deafening manner, and many of the country people make all the noise they can. Similar precautions are taken when there is an eclipse of the moon.

Of course, the mandarins do not really believe in the story of the Heavenly Dog, but many of the people do, and the officials have to follow the customs set them by those who have gone before.

Two hundred years ago Jesuit missionaries taught astronomy in Peking, making a fine observatory and astronomical instruments. But for many centuries before that the Chinese knew how to calculate eclipses; ever since B.C. 2159 they have kept a record of the most important eclipses. Occasionally the royal astronomers made mistakes. It is said that in the twelfth century they foretold an eclipse that never took place; but they made the best use of their blunder by telling the Emperor that the heavens had done without this omen of ill luck out of regard for him.

The Chinese have a great many other superstitions besides those about eclipses. For instance they think that fires, which are very common all over the Empire, are caused by Mars, or the Fire Star, as they call him. They think it very unlucky to talk of fires, saying that the mere mention of the word may bring one. So that they often say, "Water is being poured on," when they mean to say that a house is on fire. For they have fire-engines in China, which they call "Water Dragons." I suppose they have been used there for centuries! Tiny, useless little things they look, when we have been accustomed to the fine, large fire-engines that are used in England; but they do good service for all that. They are pulled rapidly through the streets by the firemen, who have to employ coolies to carry water in buckets to keep the "Water Dragons" full.

Some years ago Mr. Foster went to help to extinguish a fire in Hankow. He was greatly disgusted by seeing one coolie deliberately empty his buckets out into the street, because the man who was paying for the water that they carried happened to be away just then. This coolie would not give the water that he had brought to be used by the firemen unless he was paid for it; he would rather waste it than that!

It is wonderful how quickly a number of little "Water Dragons"



FESTIVAL WITH PROCESSION.

appear on the scene when the fire alarm has been once given. Gongs are beaten by the firemen as they race along with their engines, and crowds collect in a very short space of time. Soldiers are often sent to the spot to keep order; and if it is a serious fire, officials will appear to see what can be done. I am sorry to say many people come not to help, but to steal. For it is not often that only one house is burnt at a time. The houses are built very close together, many of them of wood, others of mats, and even the brick houses have wooden supports and beams; so that when a fire breaks out scores, if not hundreds, of houses are burnt one after the other. The flames bursting out fiercely are carried easily across the narrow streets and alleys, till the whole district seems in a blaze. So as soon as a fire begins the neighbours get much alarmed; they prepare to move out their belongings before their houses catch fire, and this is the opportunity for thieves. Everything is in confusion, and they rush in and lay hands on whatever they can seize—money, clothes, boxes, and even children. Young girls are often carried off and sold, and their parents never see them again. So the officials and soldiers are needed at these times to keep order, if they can; but I am afraid the soldiers often steal things themselves!

When the fire is over the neighbours whose houses have been spared pay the firemen, and give feasts in their honour. But those who have been burnt out are in a sad plight. There is no insurance money with which to make a fresh start in life, and many are suddenly reduced from comfortable circumstances to abject poverty.

It is considered very unlucky to take in any one whose house has just been burnt down; the fire-demon might come with him, and the house in which he was staying would probably be burnt next.

Of course, if there are very near relations they feel compelled to take the sufferers in; but where there are not, the poor people have to live among the ruins of their old homes. It is a pitiful sight, especially in winter, to go near the scene of a recent fire. The ground is covered with little mat sheds put up by the unfortunate

people whose houses have been destroyed. In these many who the day before had comfortable homes now herd together like refugees from a devastating flood. Some of them may have saved enough to rebuild their houses, and others can borrow from friends and



CHINESE PORTERS AND WHEELBARROW COOLIE.

relatives; but very many, after each fire, sink down to swell the vast number of the suffering poor.

The neighbours whose houses have been spared often invite some Taoist priests to go through ceremonies on their behalf before the Fire Star. They make various offerings to thank him for having taken care of their houses during the fire. The candles used at this

worship must be white, or yellow, or green; the ordinary red candles cannot be used, as red is the colour of fire.

According to Chinese law the man in whose house a fire has originated should be brought before the magistrate and punished for his carelessness.

Knowing this, the unhappy man often hides or leaves the neighbourhood at once if he is able to do so; but I have heard of kind-hearted officials pitying ruined men brought before them, and instead of commanding them to be beaten or imprisoned, sometimes helping them with a little money.

The mandarins themselves are punished if a serious fire occurs in the district under their control. They are fined, and sometimes degraded, for the Chinese theory is that they are responsible for whatever happens there.

So, of course, the officials try to prevent the news of fires and other troubles reaching Peking, for it is



THE CANGUE.

(A common punishment in China.)

the Government at Peking alone that can fine and degrade high officials.

Fires are dreaded in China, not only for the damage they cause and loss of property, but often because they spoil what is called

the *fung-shui*, or luck of the place. *Fung-shui* literally means "wind and water," but it is used to express the good or bad luck of a neighbourhood.

I remember some years ago, when a very picturesque pagoda in Wuchang was burnt down, it was connected in the Chinese mind with the appearance of a comet, and was thought to forbode evil to the city.

When a large temple or any other public building is set on fire by lightning that is far more serious, for the god of thunder is much feared in China. When any one is struck by lightning, or as the Chinese always say, killed by thunder, it is believed that this is a punishment for some special crime, and that, on examining the body of the dead man, some writing will be found on his back, telling for what sin he has met with so fearful a death. Of course, they think that Heaven writes in Chinese!

It is said that good people are never struck by lightning, but only bad ones. Perhaps you would like to know what sort of people are considered bad in China. I will tell you. Sons who are not good to their parents; children who drop rice on the floor, or who are in other ways disrespectful to the five kinds of grain; people who throw paper, on which Chinese words have been printed or written, into dirty places, or who in any other way do not reverence Chinese writing—these are the sort of people who may expect to be struck by lightning, as well as murderers, robbers, and criminals of all kinds. If the man who has met with his death in this way is not known to have been guilty of any of these sins, it is supposed that he committed murder or theft, or was undutiful, in some previous state of existence.

The Chinese worship the god of thunder; he is represented as having four claws on each foot, and two arms coming out from under his wings. In one hand he holds a chisel, and in the other a mallet. Lightning is represented as a woman holding a looking-glass in her hands.

After any one has been struck by lightning his relations call in

a priest to recite charms. They light candles, burn incense, and ring bells, and pray the god of thunder to leave the body of his victim and go back to heaven.

Perhaps you will wonder what I meant by saying that this



REVERENTLY COLLECTING PRINTED PAPER.

dreadful death is sometimes considered as the punishment for a sin committed in a previous state of existence.

Most of the Chinese believe in the doctrine of transmigration: that is, they believe that when any one dies the soul is born again into the world, and is rewarded or punished according to his good or

bad deeds. So when a poor man dies, if he has lived what the Chinese consider a good life, they say he will be born into some rich and prosperous family ; but if he has lived a bad life, he will suffer by being born still poorer—perhaps he will be blind, or diseased, or a beggar, or he may even come into the world next time as a woman ! If he has been very bad indeed, he may not even be human, but may be born a calf, a pig, a bird, a fish, or an insect ! So Chinese beggars frequently call out, "I am suffering for my sins !" by which they mean that in some former life they committed sins for which they are now being punished. This is what the Buddhists call the doctrine of transmigration of souls ; and those who believe in it think that it is wrong to kill animals for food, so many of them are vegetarians. For of course, if they think that the soul of their dead father or mother may be in a pig or a cow, they will naturally shrink from killing those animals, and eating pork and beef. So they think that they acquire merit by not eating meat. Often when I ask some heathen woman how she thinks she can obtain forgiveness for her sins, she will say, "By fasting " ; that means by abstaining from meat. The idea is, that every one in the world ought to get enough merit to outweigh his evil deeds. It is as if Heaven kept a pair of scales for each person, and put their sins in on one side and their good works on the other ; and the Chinese think if only they can do more good deeds than evil they will escape punishment.

So Buddhists sometimes write tracts exhorting people not to eat meat. In one of these tracts, called "Awards for Killing the Buffalo," there is an amusing story, which I will quote for you :—

"One day a butcher bought three buffaloes, one of which he killed. In the night this butcher suddenly began to bellow like a bull, and then became insensible. His family were alarmed, and sent for the doctor. The medicine he gave revived the butcher, and his children began to ask him what had made him ill. He answered that he had had a terrible dream. In his dream he had seen the two buffaloes which he had bought, but not yet killed, and they suddenly began to speak like men. One of them said, 'I am your father !' and the other

said, 'I am your grandfather!' As he looked at them they became more and more like men, and 'at last,' said he, 'I saw that they really were my father and grandfather!' The butcher was so painfully affected by these circumstances that he sent the cattle away into the country, and gave up being a butcher."

Chinese men, and more frequently women, sometimes vow to abstain from meat for the rest of their lives, but more often their vow is only for a certain number of months or years.

Some who worship the goddess of Mercy will not eat meat during the third, sixth, and ninth months. Some vow to honour heaven and earth by eating nothing but vegetables on the first and fifteenth of every month. Some, if eating meat when it thunders, immediately stop eating, and will not touch meat again that day. There are many other vows for longer or shorter periods, but nearly all are made on condition that their prayers for health, wealth, or children are heard and answered.

In times of drought the officials often put out a proclamation forbidding the people to kill cows or oxen till the rain falls. The idea is that it is a sin to take the lives of these animals, and that it is for this that the heavens are punishing the people by not sending rain; so they are told to repent and reform, but only until the punishment is over! Then they may sin again until the next drought. It is considered worse to kill cows and buffaloes than any other animals, as they are used by the country people to plough their fields. This makes it base ingratitude to take their lives.

Merit is said to be obtained not only by abstaining from eating meat, but also by saving animals from a violent death or from a miserable life spent in captivity.

Very often in summer we see boys with tiny cages in their hands, containing sparrows and other small birds, which they offer for sale to benevolent persons, who wish to acquire merit by releasing the little captives. Of course, as soon as the boys have emptied their cages in this way they begin to fill them again by catching fresh victims. Putting bird-lime on the end of a long bamboo, they

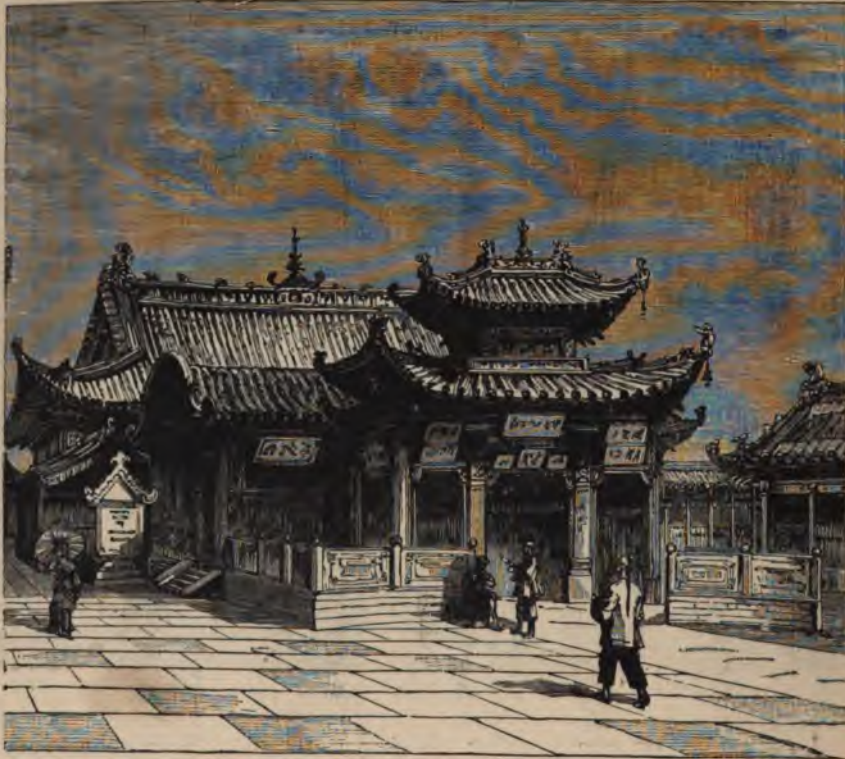
stealthily poke it up into a tree in which some bird is perching. As soon as this touches the bird escape becomes impossible, and gently lowering their bamboo with the captive bird attached, they pull it off and put it into the cage, to await the arrival of another benevolent purchaser, to whom it never seems to occur that, but for their desire to gain merit in this way, these poor little birds would never have been caught.



WATER BUFFALOES FEEDING.

I remember on one occasion visiting a temple where some very fat pigs were kept. These had been sent there by some one who had vowed to save them from being killed, and who provided, no doubt, for their keep at the temple. They were considered sacred animals there, and certainly looked well fed and comfortable. I have read of a monastery in which they kept twenty cows, sixteen goats, ten geese, ten ducks, and scores of hens and chickens. There

was a pond there too, in which were a great many large fish. All these birds, beasts, and fishes had been placed there in fulfilment of vows, and those who sent them provided for their keep.



A BUDDHIST TEMPLE.

There are many other ways of accumulating merit in China: such as repairing roads, making bridges, curing diseases, giving away coffins to the poor, or providing them with ground for graves, keeping lamps alight in dangerous places, and putting a large jar of

tea outside one's door in hot weather for passers-by to drink; while such deeds as building or endowing temples are said to bring very great merit, and to cover a multitude of sins.

But the Chinese think that happiness is to be attained not only by doing good deeds and acquiring merit, but also by charms and other devices for securing what they call luck.

Red is supposed to be a lucky colour. So in schools teachers mark the children's lessons with red ink. Taking up their books you can tell how far they have learnt, for all the stops are marked with red as far as they have gone.

Crimson silk is plaited in with the children's hair, and hangs in a thick, bright tassel at the end.

Scarlet is a very common colour too for their jackets, trousers, and hoods, for evil spirits are said to fear and dislike anything red, and they are supposed to keep away from those who wear it.

Charms on yellow paper are very numerous. Sometimes they consist of a picture of an idol, or a few mysterious words drawn or written on yellow paper. It may be pasted over the door or on the mosquito curtain, or it may be burnt, in which case the ashes are mixed with hot water or tea, and then drunk; in any case the charm is supposed to keep away the evil spirits.

A very common charm is an ancient coin, hung by a red cord round the neck. Silver necklets, bracelets, and anklets are also worn for this purpose. The most powerful are said to be made of iron nails which have been used in fastening up a coffin; the iron is covered with silver and made into these ornaments. Boys wear these as well as girls, but they are more often seen in the south than in Central China. A little boy with nothing on but a pair of blue cotton trousers and a large silver necklet looks very comical.

A silver lock, called "a hundred families' cash-lock," is often worn by an only son. The father who wishes to get one for his child collects a few cash from a hundred different families. With these he buys silver to be made into a little padlock, which is worn on a chain round the boy's neck. This is supposed to lock him to life

and to make the hundred families all interested in his attaining old age.

Another favourite charm often worn by children is a little image of a unicorn. This is supposed to be the symbol of good fortune. For thousands of years no one but Confucius has seen such an animal, and it is greatly revered in China. A very bright boy is sometimes called "the son of a unicorn"!

Some of the Chinese classics are supposed to keep away evil spirits if you put them under your pillow at night; and if you can repeat passages from them when walking alone, it is said that you need not be afraid of the demons.

Charms are often put up over the front doors of houses and shops. Sometimes they are pictures of lions and tigers, and other awe-inspiring beasts; but more frequently they are what the Chinese call "the eight diagrams"—a curious arrangement of long and short lines, which fortune-tellers much use in divination.

A looking-glass is often hung up to ward off evil influences. I have heard it suggested that the demons would be so frightened by their own reflection in the glass that they would go away at once. A three-pronged fork is sometimes stuck out menacingly over the mirror.

Cash swords are often hung up to frighten away demons. These are made of cash, tied together with red cord into the shape of a sword. About a hundred cash are used. They should either be ancient coins or should all belong to the same reign.

Certain words are considered lucky, and are used as charms. The character for happiness is written on a large piece of red paper, and pasted up at the New Year over the entrance to nearly every house in China. Sometimes they write more than one word. "May the five happinesses come in at this door" is often seen over the entrance.

The character for long life is another lucky word frequently engraved on charms and ornaments. Sometimes phrases are used, such as "Happiness like the eastern sea," and "Long life like the southern mountains."

The character for joy, written twice so close together as to form one word, is much used at weddings.

Besides using these and many other charms, the Chinese firmly believe in good and bad omens. For instance, the magpie is regarded as a bird of good omen. They call it "the happy bird," from its habit of continually bowing; and they expect good fortune when they hear its voice. So do they if a strange dog comes into their house and remains with them; or if swallows build under their eaves, then they expect to grow rich.

If the peony and certain other flowers blossom well in their gardens, that is considered a good omen; but if they suddenly wither and die, it forebodes evil. So does a crow if it suddenly interrupts business with its harsh croak, or if a strange cat comes to take up its abode in one's house.

The hoot of the owl is much feared. It is said that when any one is going to die the owl is heard calling out, "Dig! dig!" Of course, they think it is telling them to dig the grave that will soon be needed, and they instantly expect the death of the sick man.

I suppose the heathen everywhere are troubled with some such foolish superstitions. As the Psalmist says, "There were they in fear where no fear was." But when the Chinese become Christians, they are set free from these silly fancies and alarming forebodings of evil, for they know that their lives are ordered, not by Fate, according to fantastic omens, but by the living, loving, Almighty God.

I am sorry to say that some of the Chinese make a very wicked use of charms. When they hate any one, and wish some evil to happen to him, they get certain kinds of charms, which are supposed to be able to cause his death, or, at any rate, to make him ill. One way is to cut out a paper likeness of the man they want to injure, and then, after muttering various charms over it, they stick needles into the paper. These are said to cause sharp pains to the person in the same parts of his body into which the needles have been stuck; and if his heart has been pierced, death will follow. Old women sometimes undertake to injure people in this way. Of course,

they expect to be well paid for their trouble, and for the risk which they run of being found out and punished.

Another plan is to buy hurtful charms from a temple. Some are pieces of yellow paper, with the head of a dog or a buffalo drawn on them. After buying these, incense must be burnt, and candles lighted before certain idols, the worshipper vowing that if he is successful in injuring his enemy he will bring a thankoffering of food to the temple. He then takes the charms home and burns them, taking care of the ashes. These he may mix with tea, and then get the man he dislikes to drink it; or, if he cannot do this, he will contrive to rub some of the ashes on his clothes. Either plan is supposed to ensure his illness or death, unless indeed he suspects what is being done, and then the charm is harmless. For it can be counteracted by the use of other charms, and by certain idolatrous rites.

In China a house is often said to be haunted, especially if any one has committed suicide in it. Taoist priests are then called in to exorcise the ghost. They come, dressed in long grey gowns, with high hats on their heads, and after chanting monotonously for some time, and swinging censers full of incense, they let off crackers, and declare that the spirits have departed.

Sometimes a garden is said to be dangerous, because of haunting demons, who make every one that comes into it ill. A number of priests are required to catch these demons. They take empty bottles and go about repeating charms, and pretending to catch the evil spirits. Then, corking the bottles up tightly, they tell the owner of the garden that he need not fear the demons any longer, as they will take them safely away in their bottles! Occasionally the unbelieving ask how you can tell that the spirits have been caught. But, of course, they are told that, being invisible, it is not to be expected that they should be seen in the bottles, and they must just take the priests' word for it, and believe that they are there. Very often the owner of the house or garden does not believe in the power of the priests at all; but he calls them in to quiet the fears of his

more credulous servants, who have been spreading unpleasant rumours about his house being haunted.

Sometimes a ghost is said to take possession of a living person. This is especially the case when a girl has been driven to commit



IN A TEMPLE.

suicide through the unkindness of one of her relations. Her ghost is then said to come back and enter that person's body, causing a kind of madness very like the demoniacal possession which we read of in the Bible.

In other cases the Chinese try to hold converse with the dead by getting some one, who is called a medium, to go through certain ceremonies, after which he is supposed to be possessed with the dead man's spirit. They then hold a conversation with him, as if he was really the dead man come to life again.

Another plan is for a spiritualist to hold a pen over some sand. The spirit is supposed to guide the pen, and to write on the sand answers to questions which have been asked by the friends of the spiritualist.

As Christians we cannot but feel that if there is anything besides deceit and sleight of hand in these dealings with the spirit world, it is not from above, but from beneath, and we remember the command given by God Himself, "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God."

When any of these Chinese mediums have become Christians they have given up their spiritualism altogether, feeling that it would be impossible to be consistent Christians and yet to be mixed up with such practices.

One of the most ancient superstitions of the Chinese has to do with what is called alchemy. They thought it must be possible to find out some way of turning other substances to gold, and also some medicine that would enable people to live for ever. Long before the time of the famous alchemists of Europe and Arabia, Chinese alchemists were making wonderful experiments that were often almost successful, as they thought, but never quite.

Their writings are a strange mixture of sense and nonsense. Can you understand this?—"The spirit of the green dragon is mercury, and the water of the white tiger is lead. The knowing ones will bring mother and child together, when earth will become heaven, and you will be extricated from the power of matter."

In some of their recipes for making gold a caution is added that neither women, cats, nor chickens are to be allowed to come near during the process. Although the alchemists did not find out how

to make gold by their experiments, yet they did discover many things, such as how to make brilliant paints and dyes, gunpowder, fireworks, and several useful medicines.

But many of them wasted large fortunes in vain attempts to make gold, while others lost their lives through swallowing pills that were expected to make them live for ever! Wealth and long life were what they sought; poverty and death were what they found!

Is not that just what the heathen all through the world are doing still? and some people, alas! in Christian lands too. They are seeking happiness in selfishness, where, of course, it never can be found.

The fountain of true riches, as of eternal life, is in Him who said, "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."



CHAPTER VII

HEATHEN WORSHIP

IN a quiet grove of cypresses, within the walls of the great city of Peking, there stands the Temple of Heaven. There are no idols in it, and the great south altar stands under no roof but that of the overarching sky. It is a round platform of pure white marble, seventy yards across at its base. There are three tiers of marble, the highest being eighteen feet from the ground. On a block of marble placed in the middle of this platform the Emperor of China kneels once a year to worship God. Before Shang-ti, the Supreme Ruler, all the Emperors who have ruled over China for many centuries have thus prostrated themselves in lowly adoration.

Close to this altar to heaven there is a large furnace, where on these occasions a bullock is sacrificed as a whole burnt-offering, the Emperor being, as it were, the great high priest for the nation. For only the Emperor may worship there—none of the common people are thought worthy to offer a sacrifice on the altar to Heaven, and many of them would regard it as an act of presumption if they, mere subjects as they are, were to worship the God to whom their Emperor prays.

But even the Emperor does not only worship God. Besides the altar to heaven there is an altar to earth. Then there are temples to the sun and moon, and altars to the planet Jupiter and to the inventor of agriculture; there is also a Temple of Prayer for the Year, and one in which are placed the tablets to the Imperial ancestors. The Emperor worships at all these on particular days in each year.

But the Emperor himself is an object of worship in China! On

the shortest day in the year all the high officials throughout the Empire worship either the Emperor or his tablet. It is only in Peking that His Majesty can be worshipped in person, but in the capital of each of the provinces there is a temple, in which is kept the Emperor's tablet. On it is inscribed in letters of gold the loyal wish that the Emperor may live ten thousand times ten



TEMPLE OF CONFUCIUS.

thousand years! Very early in the morning, before the sun has risen, the viceroy and the other high mandarins in the city put on their most splendid furs and satins, and are carried in state to the Emperor's temple. There they alight, and stand, according to their rank, in reverent silence before the Tablet. At a signal from the master of the ceremonies they all kneel and bow their heads down

to the ground three times. At another signal they rise to their feet. Again they kneel and bow three times, and again they rise. Once more they kneel for the last time, and then the ceremony called "the three kneelings and nine knockings" is over. They are carried back to their homes, and spend the rest of the day in loyal feasting.

Nearly every one in China feasts on this day; but the common people worship, not the Emperor, but their ancestors. They buy pork, fish, cakes, and wine, and as many other nice things as they can afford. When these are cooked, they are placed on the table before the ancestral tablets. Candles are lighted, and incense and paper money are burnt, after which the elder members of the family kneel down and knock their heads on the ground before the tablets. The ancestors are invited to partake of the feast, which is then eaten by the united family. But as I told you a good deal about ancestral worship in the chapter on Filial Piety, I will not enlarge upon it here, though it is the most common form of worship among all classes throughout the whole of China.

There are three religions in that land—Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism.

All the officials and scholars are Confucianists. There are 1,560 temples dedicated to Confucius attached to the examination halls, in which large numbers of sacrifices are made every year. It is said that 62,606 pigs, rabbits, sheep, and deer, and 27,000 pieces of silk, are annually offered upon their altars. These are all eaten or otherwise used by the worshippers.

But it is not only in these temples that Confucius is worshipped. In every heathen school throughout the land there is a tablet to Confucius, before which all the scholars have to do reverence. Not that Confucius taught, or wished, the people to worship him. He was a great philosopher who lived five hundred years before Christ. He did not intend to start a new religion at all. He taught kings how to rule wisely, and sons to be filial to their parents, but he could not teach about God, for he knew nothing about God himself. One of his disciples asked him about death, and he replied, "We

do not understand life ; how can we understand death ?" It is said that he spoke little about the gods. He once said, "Respect the gods, but keep them at a distance." They were to be feared, but not loved. How different from the beautiful teaching of our Saviour, who spoke of the great love of the Father in heaven, and promised to the obedient heart His abiding presence as the highest joy !

But though the learned men in China are Confucianists, they also worship Buddhist and Taoist idols. I told you in the last chapter that in times of drought the officials often put out a proclamation forbidding the people to kill cows or oxen till the rain falls. They do more than that ; they often go to the temples to pray for rain, and I have heard of a mandarin having to put on his official robes and come out to the door of his residence to worship a little eft, which the country people had caught, declaring it to be the dragon-king who had power to send rain. Of course, the mandarin did not believe in their story, but he was afraid of a riot if he did not do what they asked him to, and so he bowed down before the little bottled eft. It is the same all over the Empire. I was reading in Dr. Williams' *Middle Kingdom* an interesting account of what happened in Canton during a serious drought, and I will quote it now for you : "In 1835 the prefect of Canton, on occasion of a distressing drought of eight months, issued the following invitation : 'Pan, acting prefect of Kwang-chau, issues this inviting summons. Since for a long time there has been no rain, and the prospects of drought continue, and supplications are unanswered, my heart is scorched with grief. In the whole province of Kwang-tung are there no extraordinary persons who can force the dragon to send rain ? Be it known to you, all ye soldiers and people, that if there be any one, whether of this or any other province, priest or such like, who can by any craft or arts bring down abundance of rain, I respectfully request him to ascend the altar of the dragon, and sincerely and reverently pray. And after the rain has fallen I will liberally reward him with money and tablets to make known his merits.'

"This invitation called forth a Buddhist priest as a rainmaker,

and the prefect erected an altar for him before his own office, upon which the man, armed with cymbal and wand, for three days vainly repeated his incantations from morning to night, exposed bareheaded to the hot sun, the butt of the jeering crowd. The failure of the priest to bring rain did not render the want of it less grievous, and their urgent necessities led the people to try every plan by which they might force the gods to send rain. The magistrates forbade the slaughter of animals—or, in other words, a fast was proclaimed; to keep the hot winds out of the city the southern gate was shut, and all classes flocked to the temples. It was estimated that on one day twenty thousand persons went to a celebrated shrine of the Goddess of Mercy, among whom were the governor and prefect and their suites, who all left their sedans and walked with the multitude. The governor, as a last expedient, the day before the rain came, intimated his intention of liberating all prisoners not charged with capital offences. As soon as the rain fell the people presented thank-offerings, and the southern gate of the city was opened, accompanied by an odd ceremony of burning off the tail of a live sow, while the animal was held in a basket!

"On another occasion it is said that the governor in Canton, having repeatedly ascended in a time of drought to the temple of the God of Rain, dressed in his thick and heavy robes, through the heat of a tropical sun, on one of his visits said, 'The god supposes I am lying when I beseech his aid, for how can he know, seated in his cool niche in the temple, that the ground is parched and the sky hot?' Whereupon he ordered his attendants to put a rope around his neck and haul his godship out of doors, that he might see and feel the state of the weather for himself. After his excellency had become cooled in the temple, the idol was reinstated in its shrine, and the good effects of this treatment were deemed to be fully proved by the copious showers which soon after fell."

There is very little reverence felt for the gods in China, but their anger is much feared. Even the Emperor has sometimes to humiliate himself before them. In the reign of one of the Emperors of the

present dynasty there was a severe drought in North China. There is a large temple in Peking, where the dragon who is supposed to send rain is worshipped. In the temple courtyard there is a well, and on its mouth is a large, flat stone, on the underside of which an image of the dragon is engraved. The Emperor having been to the



A TEMPLE IN LUH-GAN PROVINCE OF GAN-HWAY.

temple many times to pray for rain, became angry with the god, and at length, in anger, he had the stone lifted from the well. Immediately rain fell in torrents! After three wet days the Emperor came to return thanks for the rain, and to ask that it might then cease. But it continued to pour down. On the sixth day he again

gave thanks, and once more prayed that the rain might stop. But it poured down as steadily as ever. So on the ninth day the Emperor humbled himself before the dragon-king, and confessed his fault in having had the stone lifted from the well's mouth. His penitence was accepted, and the rain instantly ceased! That is a Chinese story, for the truth of which I will not vouch, but no doubt it is believed by those who tell it.

The dragon-king is not the only idol worshipped by Confucianists. Finding no help in their own religion, in times of trouble they turn to Taoism and Buddhism for comfort and help.

Taoism is a religion only found in China. The name is derived from *Tao*, which means the Word or the Way. The founder of this religion was Laotsz, a philosopher who lived at the same time as Confucius. He wrote a short book, which it is not at all easy to understand, but it contains some beautiful sayings about humility and unselfishness. But since his time many very different Taoist books have been written, some of which are little better than nonsense. Taoist priests now-a-days worship the Three Pure Ones, the Pearly Emperor, and many other idols, such as the gods of rain, of fire, of medicine, and of the kitchen. They pretend to help people to get health, wealth, and long life, and they are much employed in fortune-telling and magic.

Buddhism originally came from India. It was not much known in China till the year A.D. 66, when the Emperor had a strange dream, which led him to send men to the West in search of the true religion. They went as far as India, and then returned, bringing with them some Buddhist priests and their sacred books. Buddhism rapidly spread through China, but it soon became a very different religion from what it was in India. A number of idols were introduced, the favourite of which is the Goddess of Mercy, who is especially worshipped by vegetarians.

There are more Buddhist priests than Taoist in China now. They build their temples in all the most beautiful spots; some of them on high mountains, far away from the people who want to worship

there, but then the merit of taking the long and toilsome journey is all the greater. In these temples there are images of Buddha and of his attendants, and of the Buddhist missionaries who first came to China to spread their religion. I remember seeing five hundred large idols, all more than life-size, in one of these temples. Most of the gods worshipped in China were once men, who have been deified—that is, made into gods—by the Emperor after their death! Some of them were not at all good men either.



THE ISLAND TEMPLE, RIVER MIN.

In many of the temples there is an image of the Goddess of Mercy, and it is before this shrine that most of the worshippers come to offer incense and to pray.

There are no services in these temples such as we have in Christian churches and chapels. The priests have services in their monasteries, but other people only come in to worship when they have something special to pray for. There is no Sunday in China, but when any one is in trouble they often go to the temples to pray, and to make vows of what they will give to the idols if their prayers

are heard. What do they pray for? Health, children, wealth, long life, success in examinations—these are the things for which the heathen ask. I never heard of their praying to be made good, or that any one else might be saved from sin either! Their prayers are always selfish; they think of what they can see and touch, and it is for these things that they pray.

In many Buddhist temples there is a room meant to represent hell, in which images of wicked people are being tortured by fierce demons. The punishments shown are too terrible to write about; they are meant to warn people of the danger of wickedness. I do not know whether these warnings are laid to heart by the worshippers; certainly both priests and nuns have a very bad reputation in China.

Some of the priests have shaved their heads and entered a monastery because they have committed crimes and are afraid of the consequences; they usually succeed in this way in escaping punishment. Others have been bought when quite young, and brought up to the priesthood. There are some, no doubt, who really wish to lead higher lives than those around them, and who think by entering a monastery to escape from the temptations and sin in the world. But I am afraid that there are very few of these, and that they must often be much disappointed when they find what life in a monastery really is.

Some of their time is spent in what they call prayer. The priests meet for worship, and chant monotonously portions of their sacred books, but these are mostly in Sanscrit, which they do not understand. During their worship they ring bells, and beat a sounding board, called "a wooden fish," to keep time to their chanting. Much of their prayer consists in repeating over and over again the Sanscrit name of Buddha: "O mi to Fu! O mi to Fu!" I believe it means "Immeasurable Buddha! Immeasurable Buddha!" but it is no more Chinese than English.

These "vain repetitions" are supposed to be very meritorious. Papers are printed containing five thousand and forty-eight dots,



BUDDHIST PRIESTS IN A TEMPLE.

each of which is to be marked when the name of Buddha has been repeated a hundred, or sometimes a thousand, times. When all the dots have been marked the paper is to be burnt, and the owner is said to have acquired great merit by repeating the sacred name so often!

When the priests are not engaged in acts of worship they go about begging from house to house, carrying a bowl or basket, in which to put the rice that is given to them, and the "wooden fish," which they beat as they walk to attract attention. They also get money by selling incense sticks, paper money, and candles in the temples, and they are highly paid for their services at funerals.

Buddhist nuns look so much like the priests that I have often mistaken them for men, and when one of them has come in and sat down among the women in our dispensary I have said, "Only women patients are seen to-day; if you go to the men's hospital to-morrow, the doctor there will see you." The other patients seem very much amused at my mistake, and explain that the new-comer is a nun!

But it is not easy to see any difference between nuns and priests. The nuns do not bind their feet, or, if they were bound when they were children, they unbind them when they become nuns. They wear shoes like the men's, and long calico stockings drawn up over their full trousers to the knee, just like the priests'; their jackets, too, are of the same pattern, and both shave all their hair off! They walk about the streets as much as the priests, and call on their patrons to gossip and get subscriptions for their convent. They are not respected by the people, and their lives are often very bad. Sometimes officials order nunneries to be closed because of their evil reputation; in these cases they provide husbands for those nuns who do not wish to move to convents in other places.

We cannot divide the Chinese nation into three classes,—Confucianists, Buddhists, and Taoists,—for these religions are now so mixed that the same people worship at different times according to the rites of each sect; and you may sometimes find Confucian,

Buddhist, and Taoist images in the same temple! The Chinese often say, "The three religions are one religion," and certainly they act as if they were, even professing to believe opposite theories that could not possibly both be true.

I once had a teacher who was a Confucian scholar, with very long finger-nails and a scornful air. We were talking one day about death and the great hereafter. He said, "When the body dies the soul dies too, life comes to an end altogether."

A few days after that we got on the subject of the transmigration of souls, and he said: "I think there must be something in it. I have heard of a boy who passed an examination brilliantly, and he had never even read some of the books which he quoted! He must have studied them in a previous state of existence." The same teacher on another occasion remarked that, of course, good people go to heaven and bad to hell when they die.

It seemed impossible to make him see that these three views of death could not all be true! The Chinese mind is not logical. Officials sometimes put out a proclamation against idolatry, exposing its folly, and warning the people not to be deceived into giving their money to the priests, and then these same officials go in state to the heathen temples to worship!

There was once an Emperor who wrote strongly against Buddhism. He told the people it was cruel to sell their children to the temples to be brought up as priests, whom he called a lazy set of men, who went about deceiving the people. He showed the folly of reciting charms and books they did not understand, and said that much scandalous wickedness went on in the temples. Yet this Emperor himself worshipped Buddhist idols every day!

China is the land of unreality. What would you think of people honouring a god whose head had fallen off? You would suppose that they would realize that *that* at least could not be the true god! But this is what really happened some years ago in the temple of the Great Mountain. The head of the largest idol

there suddenly fell off, just as if his neck was broken ! It was found that white ants had eaten through the posts that supported his great head ! The body of the image was carefully carried to the back of the temple, and there buried, with the head that had fallen off, a mound being raised over his grave. But the trustees of the temple by no means lost their faith in a god who could not even protect himself from white ants. They sent out an appeal to religiously minded persons, and another large image was made to take the headless idol's place. A great many people came to watch the workmen put the new god into position, and a large sum of money was soon subscribed.

Mountains are often worshipped in China. Originally altars were built on the tops of the mountains, and the people went up there to worship heaven, but in course of time the mountains themselves came to be thought sacred, and now several of them are worshipped. Pilgrims come from long distances in fulfilment of vows made in times of trouble. Many of them had prayed for the restoration to health of their parents or of themselves, and as soon as they were able they set out on the long and toilsome journey to the temple on the sacred mountain.

One of the most famous of these is Mount O-mei, in the province of Sz-chuen. It is very lofty, its summit being often lost to sight in the clouds. On one side it is exceedingly steep, and I have heard of pilgrims committing suicide by throwing themselves down the terrible precipice, under the sad delusion that death in that sacred spot will ensure perfect happiness hereafter. The perfect happiness which good Buddhists hope for is not, however, what we should like ; their idea is that unconsciousness is bliss, and that fulness of life is misery. They get as near to their ideal as possible by sitting cross-legged for hours together, trying to think about nothing. That seems to be easier to the Chinese mind than it would be to the English !

The top of Mount O-mei is covered with monasteries and temples, where many Buddhist priests and monks live, and it is visited by thousands of pilgrims every year.

But it is not necessary to take long journeys in China, or even to go to a temple, to worship. Idols can be put up anywhere, and there are few houses in which there are no signs of idolatrous worship. Almost every shopkeeper and merchant has a shrine outside his door or somewhere on his premises where the god of wealth is worshipped. There is not often an image in this shrine, but the words "The God of Wealth" are written on a piece of red paper which is pasted up in the shrine, and incense and candles are lighted before it every day. Sometimes an oblong piece of wood is varnished and the name of the god is engraved on it and gilded. The apprentices have to light three sticks of incense and two small candles every morning and every evening before this shrine. The god is then expected to help those employed in that establishment to get rich. Besides this daily worship, special offerings of food are made on the god's birthday, which, of course, are afterwards eaten by his devoted worshippers. On the first and sixteenth days of every month merchants make a feast to their assistants; then too they burn incense, candles, and paper money before the god of wealth. While eating the good things that have been offered to the idol the head of the firm pours out wine and hands it round, thanking his clerks and workmen for their help in the business.



CONFUCIUS.

The god of the kitchen is worshipped in nearly every house in

China. The twenty-fourth day of the last month of the year is his birthday. He is supposed to go up to heaven on that day every year, with various other household gods, to report to the Supreme Ruler on the conduct of the family in whose house he has lived. Of course, his worshippers are anxious that he should take a good report of them. So they do all they can to please him on that day. A feast is spread out on a table before him, the head of the family kneels down and bows his head three times, to thank the god for his kindness during the past year, while the younger members of the family let off crackers.

Among the offerings which they make to the kitchen god are sweets and toffy, which it is hoped may so stick his lips together that when in the presence of the Supreme Ruler he shall not be able to tell of their misdeeds. The idol is then dismissed by being put in a paper chair, on which he is supposed to ride to heaven; or, if there is only a picture of the god, that is torn down and burnt, and a new one is pasted up in its place.

On the fourth day of the first month the gods are supposed to return, and there is a special ceremony to welcome them back.

Women in China are far more religious than men, and the idols which they most frequently worship are "Mother" and the "Goddess of Mercy." "Mother" is considered to be the goddess of children. She is sometimes represented in pictures as standing with a sword in one hand and a horn in the other. With the sword she drives away evil influences and with the horn she can summon good spirits to her aid! Two or three days after a baby is born a thankoffering is made to "Mother," plates of meat and fruit are placed before her image or picture, before being eaten by the worshippers. When the baby is a month old its head is shaved before her image, or before the ancestral tablet. Incense and candles are lighted and a thankoffering is presented.

When the child is four months old "Mother" is again thanked. His grandmother sometimes gives the child a baby's chair on wheels, with a nice little slab in front to hold his toys. When he is four

months old he is expected to sit in this chair. I have read of a very curious custom, though I have never seen it myself, in connection with this chair. Some soft, sticky candy is put on the seat, so that the baby will stick to the chair when put to sit down in it!

When the child is a year old there is a birthday feast, at which another thankoffering is given to "Mother." A large flat basket is put on the table, and in it are laid several things, such as pencils, paper, books, fruit, scales, and silver ornaments. The baby is dressed in new clothes and put down in the middle of the basket, to see which of these things he will take hold of. If he seizes a book or pen, it is said that he will be a distinguished scholar; if he picks up the silver ornaments, he will become rich, and so on. Whenever "Mother" is thanked for her care of the child some one holds the baby in front of her image, puts his tiny hands together, and moves them up and down, as if he too were worshipping at her shrine.

On "Mother's" birthday nearly all the women in China seem to worship her; many go to her temple to implore her blessing, others pray to her in their own homes.

The Goddess of Mercy is perhaps more worshipped than any other deity in China. She is usually represented as a mother, holding an infant in her arms, but sometimes her image has a thousand hands stretched out, as if to help those who pray to her. It is said that she was so good that she was allowed to enter the highest state of bliss, but pity for the suffering world made her refuse to leave it, and so she is called the merciful goddess who hears the prayers of men. There are three days in the year when she is specially worshipped, besides the first and fifteenth of every month. To such a compassionate spirit the thought of taking the lives of animals that men might have nicer food would be so distasteful that the worshippers on these occasions only eat vegetables, and they present a vegetable offering to her, arranged before her image, either in the temple or in their own homes.

But the worship that seems strangest to Christians, and that fills their hearts with grief as well as surprise, is that given to

the God of Gamblers and the God of Thieves! The God of Gamblers represents a man who spent his whole time in gambling, till he lost all his money and died in want. An image of him was made after his death, called "a devil gambling for cash." The idol's clothes look ragged, and his queue is coiled round his head like a coolie's, with a card stuck in it. This god is much worshipped by gamblers. They light incense and candles before him, and, kneeling down, knock their heads on the ground. Sometimes offerings are made of tobacco and cakes. When they are going to buy lottery tickets they cast lots before this idol and select numbers accordingly, expecting this "devil," who was ruined himself through gambling, to prosper them in their attempts to make money in that mean way! The God of Thieves is not only worshipped by professional thieves, but also by many traders and travellers.

Animals, too, are sometimes worshipped in China. The monkey was deified by the Emperor who got the Buddhist books from India. According to one story, it was the monkey himself who brought the sacred books from the West! At any rate, the Emperor called him "the great Sage, who is equal to Heaven"! and he has been worshipped ever since. He is believed to have the control of hobgoblins and wicked spirits, and to be able to keep them away from his faithful worshippers. His birthday comes in the spring, and then incense and candles are lighted before his shrine and offerings are made of meat, vegetables, and fruit.

The fox is supposed to have the control of the official seals, so the viceroys worship that animal. Wonderful stories are told of the power of the fox to change its shape, appearing as a man or a woman at pleasure. His spirit is said to be able to make people ill or to prevent their getting on in business, so people often worship the fox to appease his anger. The white rabbit, the heavenly dog, the tiger, and the white cock are also worshipped, but I cannot attempt to tell you about all the idols in China. I think I have told you enough to make you feel how terribly sad it is that all those millions of men, and women, and little children, who are loved, protected, and fed by

God, should be living in ignorance of Him, and turning to worship idols of wood, and metal, and paper, which cannot see, or hear, or help them!

Sometimes when the officials tell the people not to worship idols



GAMBLERS.

they remind them of the two living idols at home; that means their parents, whom they are taught to reverence almost as gods. It is often said that you should worship heaven, earth, the Emperor, your parents, and your teacher. This may be better than worshipping

dumb idols; still, it is worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator, and so is really idolatry.

I think the simple country people do dimly feel after the true God when they speak of depending upon the venerable Heaven-Father for their food; but in the next breath they will tell you that heaven and earth are great, and that they worship their ancestors!

Men and women who have been dead for ages are worshipped as if they were everywhere present and almighty, and the great, good God is forgotten, while they do not even thank the Christ who died for them. But then they have never heard His name and the sweet, sad story of the Cross, so that is more our fault than theirs. For we in Christian lands have known about our Saviour's love for centuries, and might have told them long ago, but, alas! we were thinking of ourselves, and forgetting the great, wide world which God so loved that He sent His Son to die for it; and so for generation after generation the Chinese have lived and died in the misery and hopeless darkness of heathenism.



OFFERINGS TO DEAD RELATIVES.



CHAPTER VIII

STIRRING CHANGES

SHANGHAI was the first city in the Valley of the Yangtse to be affected by the coming of the foreign barbarians, as the Chinese call all white men. Though it is not on the Great River itself, but on a little river that flows into its estuary, yet we may



CANAL IN SHANGHAI.

fairly call it in the Valley of the Yangtse. It was almost unknown to Western nations till the treaty of Nanking opened it to their trade in 1842. It had been visited seven years before that by Dr. Medhurst, of the London Missionary Society, and Mr. Stevens, an American missionary. When the Chinese officials heard of their arrival they invited them to meet them at a temple near the landing place, that they might find out why they had come. They treated the missionaries very scornfully, and when they sat down they all called out, "Get up! get up!" and seemed greatly surprised at their audacity in presuming to seat themselves in their presence! Books and tracts were given to the officials and their attendants, and to some men in the crowd outside; but though they received them from the missionaries, they only made a bonfire of them in their presence! Such a visit could not do much good, but in 1843 Dr. Medhurst returned with Dr. Lockhart, and they were able to settle in Shanghai and begin the work of the L.M.S. in that city.

Dr. Lockhart saw nearly a thousand patients every month, and Dr. Medhurst preached in the streets and temples, and had a regular Sunday service in his own house. Besides this he printed a sermon every week, and gave away large numbers of copies. He also wrote and translated many Christian books, and he was the chief translator of the Delegates' Version of the Bible. So a real beginning was made in Mission work, and before long many other workers, belonging to different societies, both English and American, came and settled in Shanghai. But they were only able to work in that city and in its immediate neighbourhood, for an Imperial edict was put out in which it was said that "foreigners of every nation are prohibited from going into the country to propagate religion." It was not till 1858 that other ports were opened, and that missionaries were allowed to travel about and to preach, if they had proper passports.

But by that time another movement had begun in China that was to do much to shake the faith of the people in the Valley of

the Yangtse in their idols—I mean the Tai Ping rebellion. It began in South China; the leader of it was a farmer's son; his name was Hung Siu Tsuen. Hung was his surname, which always comes first in China. Siu Tsuen means "Elegant Completeness." When he was seven years old he began to go to school. Though he was poor he was very ambitious, and was determined to pass the Government examinations. He studied hard for several years, but, though his name was always one of the first at the district examination, he never succeeded in becoming a "Budding Genius."

When he was twenty he went to Canton to try for his degree, and while there he met a Christian preacher, one of the first converts of the L.M.S. in China. This man gave "Elegant Completeness" a set of tracts which he had written himself, but, though the young man took them home, he did not read them carefully. Seven years afterwards he again failed in the examinations. He was so disappointed that he became quite ill and expected to die. As his parents stood by his bedside, he said, "O my parents! how badly have I returned the favour of your love to me! I shall never get a name that will reflect lustre upon you!" After saying these words he lost consciousness and fell into a trance. He thought he saw a dragon, a tiger, and a cock come into the room; then a number of men carried a beautiful sedan-chair and asked him to sit in it. He thought he did so, and was carried away, to the strains of lovely music, till he reached a bright and beautiful place where multitudes of happy people welcomed him with gladness.

But an old woman led him down to a river and said, "You dirty man! why have you kept company with those people and defiled yourself? I must wash you clean." So he was washed in the river, and then he entered a spacious building with a crowd of old and virtuous men. They opened his body, and took out his heart, putting a new red one in its place. Then they went into a large hall, exceedingly splendid and glorious, and there on a high

seat sat an aged man, who wept as "Elegant Completeness" entered, and said to him, "All human beings are produced and sustained by me; they eat my food and wear my clothing, but not one among them has a heart to remember and venerate me; what is worse, they take my gifts, and with them worship demons. Do not thou imitate them."

Having said this, the aged one on the throne gave him a sword to destroy the demons, a seal to overcome evil spirits and a sweet yellow fruit to eat.

"Elegant Completeness" received these gifts, and was then shown in a vision the awful sin of the world. The horror of it awoke him from his trance; he felt stronger, and, rising from his bed, he dressed and went to see his father. Making a low bow, he said, "The venerable old One on high has commanded that all men shall turn to me, and that all treasures shall flow to me."

His illness lasted about forty days, and he had many visions and trances. In them he often saw one whom he called "Elder Brother," who taught him how to kill evil spirits.

As he got better he felt sure that it was intended that he should one day be Emperor of China. But he continued studying for the examinations and teaching his village school. In 1843 he again failed to get his degree, and that year his brother-in-law borrowed the tracts which he had received from the native preacher. These were essays and sermons, and contained several chapters from Dr. Morrison's translation of the Bible. The young man was much interested in them, and when he returned the books he urged "Elegant Completeness" to read them too. He did so, and was much surprised to find in these books the key, as he thought, to his own visions. He now understood that the venerable old man, whom all men ought to worship, was God, the Heavenly Father, and the Elder Brother, who helped him to destroy the demons, was Jesus, the Saviour of the world. The demons were the idols, and it must be his business in life to destroy them. He felt as if he was awaking from a long dream.

Now he knew the way to heaven, and had a sure hope of everlasting life.

He and his brother-in-law baptized themselves in a brook, and began to preach the new doctrine to all their friends. Two of their fellow-students soon joined them. They removed the Confucian tablet from their schools, as they would no longer teach their pupils to worship Confucius, but this resulted in all their scholars being withdrawn. They then made a living by selling pencils and ink, and wandered about the country peddling and preaching. In this way many converts were made, but their teachers were not well-instructed themselves. So after three years "Elegant Completeness" went to Canton to learn more of the truth.

He visited an American missionary, Mr. Roberts, and stayed with him two months, and then, having no means of support in Canton, he returned to his home in the country.

He found that about two thousand converts had been gathered in at Thistle Mount, and, though they underwent a good deal of persecution, they remained steadfast in the faith. Many of them were very ignorant, and "Elegant Completeness" seems to have taught his own visions as much as the Word of God, but they were all strong in their attacks on idolatry, and even went so far as to destroy idols that were generally revered by the people.

In 1848 Hung Siu Tsuen's father died, trusting in the new faith, and directing that no heathen service should be held at his funeral. The whole family had by this time become its followers, and the leaders of the movement began to discuss their plans for the future. "Elegant Completeness" was acknowledged by all as their chief; he introduced strict discipline, forbade the use of wine or opium, commanded the women and girls to unbind their feet, and called upon all his followers to keep the Sabbath and to worship God.

They grew in numbers rapidly, and as in their zeal they destroyed temples and idols, they irritated the people and often came

to blows. Those who were oppressed by the officials, or who had got the worst of it in some local feud, came over to Thistle Mount for protection, and joined the new sect, who were called "the Church of God."

The officials began to fear this large body of men, and some Imperial troops were sent to arrest the leaders; but they were driven off, and the victors seized a large town and fortified it. Thousands joined them, and they became a great army. They cut off their queues and let their hair grow long all over their heads, and they wore the dress common in China before the Manchu conquest.

"Elegant Completeness" became more and more possessed with the idea of his Divine mission from the Heavenly Father. He secluded himself from the gaze of his followers, and declared that he had received fresh revelations as to the management of the army that was to sweep idolatry out of the land. He began to call himself "Heavenly King," and at last issued a decree in which he says, "The Heavenly Father said, 'I have sent your Lord down into the world to become the Heavenly King; every word he utters is a heavenly command; you must be obedient.'"

Two of his friends were called the Eastern and Western Princes; they also were supposed to have revelations of the will of God.

About this time many rebels and members of secret societies joined them. They were always received on condition that they would worship the true God alone. Teachers were sent to each of these rebel chiefs to instruct them in the heavenly way. These teachers were sent back after a time with presents of money, which they put into the common treasury, but one of them kept the money for himself, saying nothing about it. "Elegant Completeness" enquired into this, and had the man beheaded.

Some of the members of secret societies, who had just joined, thought this too strict, and left at once.

By 1852 so many had joined their ranks that they decided to



CHINESE SOLDIERS.

march north, and before the end of the year they had reached the Yangtse, taking many cities and large towns on the way thither. Eighty days had been wasted in trying to take Changsha, the capital of Hunan, but at last they raised the siege and came to Hupeh, where city after city fell before them. Hankow, Wuchang, and Hanyang were easily taken. Proceeding down the Yangtse, taking the principal cities on their way, they reached Nanking in March, and took that ancient capital after a ten days' siege. Here the Heavenly King set up his court, not a year after the beginning of his march northward. He had set out with less than ten thousand followers, but had at least eighty thousand by the time he took Nanking. They went forth in the full conviction that God had appointed their leader to destroy idolatry, and set up the kingdom of heaven, by which they meant that the Manchu usurpers were to be dethroned and China was to be governed by a native monarch, the Heavenly King himself!

The Imperial troops that were sent against them were very cruel, and the sufferings of the people were more owing to their ravages than to those of the Tai Ping rebels. "Tai Ping" means "Great Peace," and was the name of the new dynasty which they hoped to establish in the place of the Manchu dynasty, which is styled "Great Purity." Among the Chinese the Tai Ping soldiers are usually spoken of as the long-haired rebels, because of their custom of not shaving their heads.

While the Tai Ping army was in possession of Nanking it was visited by the British gunboat *Hermes*. Mr. Meadows, the interpreter on board that vessel, has written an interesting account of what he saw of the rebels. On their way up the Yangtse to Nanking they anchored off Silver Island, which had been taken by the Tai Pings. Mr. Meadows says:—

"On landing in the Chinese boat I found in the temples only a few priests. As I hurried rapidly through the deserted courts and halls, I found everywhere on the spots which are invariably occupied by enormous idols only heaps of the clay that had formed

portions of the gods of this famed temple. Further, the few scared priests who followed my steps had the hair growing all over their heads, and told me that the rebels had prohibited them on pain of death from practising the monastic rite of shaving."

On reaching Nanking the captain of the gunboat sent a note to the rebel chief, saying that an English ambassador was on board, who wished to meet him.

A strange letter was sent in reply, saying that the Chinese had long wished to expel the Manchus, but they were obliged to wait Heaven's own time. Now the Divine commission had been conferred on the Chinese, and they were bound to do their duty to Heaven by extirpating the demons (Manchus), and aiding in the establishment of their own sovereign.

After getting this letter Mr. Meadows went on shore to arrange for the meeting. Two men dressed in yellow silk gowns and hoods came to the door of the house as he approached, and some soldiers ordered him to kneel down. This he refused to do, but marched into the presence of the Northern Prince, whose first question was, "Do you worship God, the Heavenly Father?" Mr. Meadows replied that the English had done so for eight or nine hundred years.

On this the prince ordered seats to be brought, and said that as children and worshippers of one God we were all brethren. He asked if Mr. Meadows knew the heavenly rules? And when he began repeating the first commandment he laid his hand on his shoulder and exclaimed, "The same as ourselves! the same as ourselves!"

He said that they had enjoyed the special protection and help of God, without which they could never have been able to do what they had done against superior numbers and resources, adding, "It would be wrong for you to help them, and, what is more, it would be of no use. Our Heavenly Father helps us, and no one can fight against Him."

When Mr. Meadows asked about the Tai Ping King, the prince

said, "He is the true Lord; the Lord of China is the Lord of the whole world; he is the second Son of God, and all people in the whole world must obey and follow him."

Of course the English could not agree to these astonishing claims to universal empire, but told the princes that they wished to remain neutral, and had no intention of helping the Imperial troops. If we had kept to that resolve, China would probably have been a very different country to-day from what it is. But the long-continued fighting and the unsettled state of the country were bad for trade.

Besides the Tai Ping rebels a Triad Society was making trouble in Central China. They attacked and seized Shanghai, where by that time there were a large number of English and American merchants. Imperial troops next arrived, and besieged the city for a year and a half. Dr. Lockhart's hospital was in great danger, shots whistled past and fell all around. The place was crowded with wounded soldiers, many of them being placed in the verandahs of the hospital.

All the horrors of war were to be seen both within and without the city. As the siege went on, men and women began to die of starvation. The besieging army plundered the villages for miles around, murdering the wretched inhabitants.

The Triad soldiers even fired upon the hospital, because their enemies were cared for by Dr. Lockhart. One morning as the inmates were dispersing after prayers a shot came through the roof, passed over their heads, and buried itself in some firewood in the kitchen. Another day a shell exploded in the hall of the hospital, tearing up the floor and shattering the furniture. Yet, though many people were in the hall at the time, no one was hurt!

At last the French and the British joined the Imperialists in fighting against the Triad soldiers, who were defeated and obliged to leave the city. Before doing so, however, they set fire to the houses. The conflagration was terrible, and no quarter was given to any of the rebels who were taken prisoner by the Imperialists.

Gradually, however, the city recovered from the ravages of war, and trade could go on as usual.

Soon after this an American adventurer, Frederick Ward, offered to help the Manchus. He got together a number of European and American soldiers, chiefly deserters; and with their help he trained some Chinese troops, and led them against the Tai Pings, defeating them again and again, and retaking many important cities. In 1862 General Ward, as he was then called, was offered ten million dollars if he would capture Ningpo. He did so, but was mortally wounded in the assault. He lived half an hour, but died on the field of battle. Over his grave a shrine was erected by Imperial decree; and incense is burnt there to this day.

The following year General Gordon took the command of Ward's soldiers, who had become known as the "Ever Victorious Army"; and then the British and French troops lent their aid in subduing the rebellion. Of course, against these combined forces the Tai Pings were powerless.

In 1864 Nanking itself was taken. It is said that when the explosion of mines and bursting of shells warned the rebels of their coming fate, "Elegant Completeness" committed suicide by swallowing poison. And so ended that remarkable movement, which might have led, had it been successful, to the abolition of idolatry throughout the Empire.

The Christianity that would have taken its place was of a very strange kind. We read that in their worship they placed bowls of various kinds of food as offerings to God, and three cups of tea, one for each person in the Trinity. Polygamy was permitted, because David and other Old Testament saints had more than one wife. And the extermination of the Manchus was justified by referring to the wars of the Israelites under Joshua.

Their accounts of some of their battles remind us of Cromwell's Ironsides. A shrivelled-up, elderly little man, in a yellow and red hood, said to Mr. Meadows, "The Imperialists say we employ magical arts; the only magic we have used is prayer to

God. In Kwangsi we were sorely pressed; there were then only some two or three thousand of us; we were beset on all sides by much greater numbers; we had no powder left, and our provisions were all done. But our Heavenly Father came and showed us the way to break out. So we put our wives and children in the middle, and not only forced a passage, but completely beat our enemies. If it be the will of God that our Tai Ping prince shall be the sovereign of China, then he will be; if not, then we will die here."

The most dangerous thing about their religion was that they said they had new revelations from Heaven, and that these must be obeyed as much as the Bible. The Eastern Prince used to fall into trances and speak as though he was the mouthpiece of the Heavenly Father. The Western Prince in the same way spoke as if he was uttering the commands of the Heavenly Elder Brother. In this way generals were tried and traitors convicted, and some soldiers were condemned to death. They even ventured to rebuke the Heavenly King himself! Christian books were written to be taught in the schools. These contained much Scriptural truth, but it was mixed up with curious errors.

The Eastern Prince stated in writing that under the rule of the Tai Pings the Bible would be substituted for the Confucian classics as the text-book in the examinations throughout the Empire.

But the power of the Tai Pings was crushed by the help of Christian soldiers from the West, and the Peking Government is as heathen to-day as it ever was. The rebellion seemed to have ended in utter disaster; twenty million people must have been killed during it, and ruined cities and desolated towns marked the course of the army for two thousand miles. Hankow was taken by assault six different times in thirty months, till in 1855 it was nothing but a heap of ruins!

Still, the results of the movement were not all evil. Idolatry received a severe blow in the nine provinces through which the Tai Ping army passed, and all along the valley of the Yangtse, wherever we go now, we find ruins of temples and shrines that have

not yet been rebuilt, and priests will tell us that things have never been the same since the coming of the long-haired rebels.

It is a curious fact that while French and English soldiers were helping the Manchu Government to put down the Tai Ping rebellion, the allied armies of France and England were marching upon Peking



THE PORT OF SHANGHAI.

to compel the Emperor to sign a new treaty, granting protection and opening fresh ports to the hated foreigners.

In 1860 our victorious troops entered the capital, destroyed the splendid palaces, with their priceless treasures of ancient art and ornaments, compelled the Chinese to pay £100,000, and then consented to sign a treaty of peace.

Since that time there have been many changes in China. If you were to visit Shanghai to-day, you would be struck with the European aspect of the town. Within the walls of the native city, it is true, the streets are as narrow and dirty as of old, but outside those walls there is a marked difference. In the foreign concessions (that is, the land conceded by the Chinese Government to the British, French, and Americans), there are fine shops and grand buildings, lighted by gas and electricity. Even the Chinese shops have English sign-boards, and the shopkeepers talk that curious jargon known as "pidjin English." I wonder whether you would understand such a conversation as this?—

"No belong that fashion!"

"Maskee! My go topside, looksee can catchee one piecie all same missessy wantchee."

We sometimes overhear Chinese talking to one another in this "English," because they come from different parts of the Empire and cannot understand each other's dialects. Russians, French, and Germans nearly all speak "pidjin English" to their servants in China, and it is the language in which most of the business transactions in the ports are carried on.

The wide Shanghai streets are now crowded with horses, carriages, bicycles, and jinrickshas, besides the time-honoured wheelbarrow. Jinrickshas are tiny carriages on two wheels, drawn by men, who run very quickly, dragging their light little vehicles. Many wealthy Chinamen live on the foreign concessions, and I am sorry to say that brilliantly lighted opium dens, gin palaces, and other bad places are allowed there, which would not be tolerated by Chinese officials in the native city.

But though Shanghai is a very wicked place, much good is being done there too. There are a number of churches and chapels, hospitals and schools, and very many who were once heathen have there been gathered into the fold of Christ.

Dr. Muirhead joined the L.M.S. only four years after it began work in Shanghai, and he has been living there ever since. Looking

back over fifty years' work in that city, he says, "Altogether we look upon as many as 1,500 men and women having been brought into the fellowship of the Gospel since the commencement of our Mission. Schools for boys and girls have been opened, and on an average a hundred scholars have been under instruction. During the whole period of nearly fifty years the religious conduct of the hospital has been maintained by the Mission and, day by day, ser-



A JINRIKSHA.

vices have been held among the patients. Millions of pages have been printed in the way of tracts for general circulation, and the work is still being continued. There are at present eleven out-stations, in each of which there is a native preacher residing."

On the occasion of his jubilee the Shanghai chapel was decorated with banners and scrolls, presented by Chinese Christians, and inscribed with suitable mottoes, such as, "For fifty years, as one

unbroken day, he has proclaimed the Word of God"; "His life, even to hoar hairs, has been devoted to the service of Christ."

After prayer, singing, and addresses from the native helpers expressing their thankfulness to God and loving regard for their venerable pastor, a feast was enjoyed, provided by the Chinese Christians, poor though many of them are. All day long letters and telegrams of congratulation poured in upon the veteran missionary, and in the evening his English colleagues made him a handsome jubilee gift.

But the work he has done has not been only in Shanghai, but in the country districts round. Long before missionaries were allowed to settle in the interior they could make short preaching tours, which they generally did by boat. Chinese boats are flat-bottomed, and can go in very shallow water. They have large, picturesque sails, and go well before the wind, but if there is no wind they must be rowed, poled, or towed, and that is slow work. For short journeys missionaries hire a small boat. There is an arched roof over their heads, and they lie down on the bottom of the boat. It is rather like sleeping in a tunnel, for even if there are doors in front, it is generally open at the back to the place where the steersman sits, grasping the handle of a huge rudder, and smoking very bad tobacco. But for long journeys a larger boat is obtained with several compartments, which can be made very comfortable.

In 1855 Mr. Muirhead went for an interesting journey, visiting places about two hundred miles from Shanghai. He stopped at all the towns and larger villages on the way, giving away a great many tracts and preaching wherever he went, sometimes in a large temple, and sometimes standing on the temple steps and addressing a crowd outside, several hundred people gathering to listen to him.

Dr. Edkins also took missionary journeys, and was able to stay for a few months in one town, till he was driven out by the scholars.

In 1855 Mr. Griffith John joined the Shanghai Mission, and it was not long before he began his preaching tours. One of these led him

up the Grand Canal. One evening the boat was stopped by a strong chain drawn across the canal; but the next morning they were allowed to pass. At one place a military mandarin sent him a present of cakes and other food, and some books were sent to him in return. As Mr. John was giving away books at another place he heard a woman saying to her companion, "Look! there is a little



A RIVER BOAT.

devil!" "Yes," said the other, "he is a real devil." She meant that he was a foreigner, and not a long-haired rebel.

About this time Mr. John wrote home, "At the temples a missionary may preach every afternoon to hundreds and sometimes thousands of listeners. At these points the citizens assemble daily to enjoy a quiet cup of tea and a talk over the news of

the day. The moment a foreigner makes his appearance up goes the shout, 'A white devil is come!' The chat, however interesting, is immediately broken up, the highly-flavoured tea is unhesitatingly forsaken, and the missionary in less than five minutes is surrounded by hundreds of gazing listeners. . . . On my way home from the temple I met a man with a large serpent hanging over his shoulder. I asked him what was his object in carrying that loathsome creature about? 'To sell it,' was the answer. 'What could a person do with it were he to buy it?' 'Oh,' said he, 'he might accumulate a vast amount of merit by releasing it from its present misery.' At these festivals men catch serpents and other noxious creatures to sell; and many of the most devout buy them and let them go, sincerely believing that by so doing they may be relieving a deceased relative, or a dear old friend, from present misery and possible death."

In 1859 Mr. Muirhead and Mr. John took a long and adventurous journey to the Yellow River. On their way they crossed the Yangtse, and visited many places where no foreigner had ever been seen before. It was not always easy to get on. At one place they sent their cards on shore to the mandarin; he sent an officer on board to enquire their business. He was very talkative and affable in his way, and invited the missionaries to come and take a cup of tea in his "vile cottage," as he politely called his home. They consented, but suggested that it would be hardly safe to leave the boats without some one to take care of their things. "Don't mind that," said he, "it will be all right"; and he ordered chairs to be brought for them to ride to his home. But when he rose to go he surprised them by saying, "You had better not come"! He had expected them to decline his polite invitation, and was greatly disgusted when the foreign barbarians took him at his word!

When they asked for chairs in which to continue their journey they were promised at once. But after waiting for six hours their patience was exhausted, and when they were advised to wait till the next day for them, they said they would not wait any longer, but

would walk. This greatly surprised the officials, who sent four soldiers with them as a guard of honour. These soldiers acted as spies, and none of the people were allowed to talk to the missionaries. They reached the bed of the Yellow River at last, but only to find it quite dry!—the water had found another channel to the sea. The officials put so many difficulties in the way of their travelling further that they thought it best to return to Shanghai, where for a time things were in a very unpleasant state.

The English were accused of kidnapping Chinese coolies and taking them out of the country. For awhile it was unsafe for the missionaries even to enter the native city of Shanghai. The largest chapel suffered severely: the doors, windows, seats, and pulpit were all smashed or taken away, and great excitement prevailed everywhere.

Mr. Muirhead tried to visit the country stations, but it was dangerous work. On one journey in the middle of the day he was called on deck by the boatman's cry of "Pirates!" He saw an open boat, with eight or ten men on board, holding boat-hooks, ready to fix them into his boat. But when they saw a foreigner on board they consulted together, and then sailed away. So Mr. Muirhead continued his journey, and reached his country station safely. There he preached and talked with inquirers till a soldier came up and said an official had ordered him to see the missionary on board his boat, which was to leave at once. Mr. Muirhead said, "I shall go presently." The soldier said, "No, you must go at once; the people think you are a kidnapper, and will kill you." The boatmen got frightened, and said they should take their boat back to Shanghai at once, whether Mr. Muirhead went in it or not! So he thought it best to give in and to leave the place. A crowd had gathered, shouting, "Beat him! kill him!" So the boatmen pushed off, and anchored in a quieter place for the night.

At the next village where he went on shore to preach a crowd collected at once. They began to throw stones at the boatman. The bank was high, and Mr. Muirhead could not get down it just there

into the boat, so he walked on, the crowd following. They beat him, and threw mud and stones at him from every direction. He got one severe blow from a sharp stone on the side of his head, and a handful of dry earth striking him in the face nearly blinded him. At last they pushed him down the steep bank of the river. Happily he fell on his feet, and was able to spring on board the boat and push off from the shore. They hoisted their sails, and, with a fair wind, were soon out of reach of their persecutors.

And so, sometimes by encouraging journeys, and sometimes in danger and disappointment, the work has gone on, till now in all the large villages and towns near Shanghai there are some who know the truth, some who have turned from their idolatry and their sin to Him Who is the Light of the world and the Saviour of all men.





HANYANG AND THE TORTOISE HILL.

CHAPTER IX

HANKOW AND ITS GOSPEL HALLS

IF I could take you up the Tortoise Hill, you would have a fine view of Hankow. It is not a very high hill, but the country round is so flat that from the top of it you can see for a great distance in every direction. Of course, there is a temple on the top, as there is on nearly every hill near a city in China. But it is small compared to what it was before the coming of the long-haired rebels. Ruined foundations still show how much larger the buildings used to be, and the half temple that has been rebuilt does not seem to have many worshippers coming to its shrines.

As we approach a dog rushes out, barking furiously. Chinese dogs are very anti-foreign, and smell Europeans from afar. If we enter the temple, a Buddhist priest will come forward and politely offer us cups of tea. Of course, if we accept them he will expect a small present, but we shall prefer to walk through the courtyard and out on to the free hillside.

At the foot of the hill lies the walled city of Hanyang; but there are more houses now outside the walls than within them, the suburbs are growing so rapidly. The viceroy's ironworks are very conspicuous with their tall chimneys, and there is actually an engine drawing some trucks of iron ore from the Yangtse. It has been brought a long way by boat to be smelted here. I remember the time when the place where the ironworks now are was a pretty lake, quiet and delightfully peaceful after the crowded, noisy streets of the city. But now the hum of machinery and the shriek of the engine have invaded the sleepy town of Hanyang!

Away to the right, across the narrow, winding river Han, stretches an unbroken sea of grey tiles for four or five miles along the river bank. What is the difference between it and an English city? I think you would say, "Why, there are no church spires, and no chimneys to the houses, and no open spaces anywhere! It is just one dense mass of houses!" So it is. There are a few mission chapels, it is true,—about one to every hundred thousand of the people,—but we cannot afford spires for them yet in China, and they are not noticeable from the hill-top. Down the river, on the English Concession, a tall Roman Catholic cathedral is conspicuous, with its green tiles, and the Russians have built a church with a dome like a mosque and a shining gold cross on the top; but the spire of the little English church is too small to be seen at that distance. The smoke from the Russian factories, where they make brick-tea, and from the steamers, can be seen from far; and the English houses have chimneys, of course. But the Chinese do not warm their houses, however cold the weather is; they just put on more clothes instead: so their houses have no chimneys. A few guilds rise above the surrounding houses, with quaint carvings, and striking green and yellow tiles; so do the shaky wooden platforms on the roofs, where clothes are always hanging out to dry; and the gateways at the top of the steps leading down to the river are high and picturesque. But, except for these, the city is one monotonous grey level. Only those who know how

closely the Chinese live would guess that in that long, narrow strip of houses 800,000 people live!

Looking to the left, across the wide waters of the Yangtse, we see the great city of Wuchang. There are not nearly so many people in it as in Hankow, but the houses are not so closely packed together. There are more official residences and gardens, and a large



A GUILD IN HANKOW.

parade ground for the soldiers; the Serpent Hill, too, winds through the city. So it covers quite as much ground as Hankow.

These three great cities have been there for centuries. Millions of people have lived in them, toiled, suffered, and sorrowed, "having no hope, and without God in the world"; and then they have died, and their bodies have been laid to rest on the hillside, with heathen ceremonies and offerings, to the sound of wailing and crackers.

No prayer to God, no hymn of hope, ever brought peace to the dying or comfort to the mourners till the good news of the Gospel was preached to them for the first time thirty-seven years ago.

Mr. Muirhead was the first missionary to visit Hankow. In 1861 he visited Nanking, and had interesting interviews with the Tai Ping chiefs, who were then in possession of the place. While he was there the British admiral arrived with five vessels. When Mr. Muirhead called on him, he invited him to stay on board the flagship and to go with them up the Yangtse to Hankow. It was a peaceful journey, and Mr. Muirhead was glad of this opportunity of going so far into the interior. It was almost the first time that steamers had been seen above Nanking, and, of course, the natives gazed at them with astonishment and curiosity. They stopped at several places on the way, and at each of these Mr. Muirhead went on shore to preach to the people.

Everywhere there were signs of the havoc made by war, but some places that had been deserted by the rebels were being rebuilt. The temples were all in ruins. When the expedition reached Hankow they saw a number of new shops and houses that had been built since the departure of the Tai Pings. But while they were there reports were being spread that the rebels were advancing to retake the city! There was a regular scare; people packed up their goods and left the city by thousands. The shops were closed, and the streets deserted, and most of the boats, even, disappeared. As a matter of fact, the Tai Pings had taken a city sixty miles off, but this time they did not advance on Hankow, and before long the people returned and went on with their business as usual. While the little English fleet was there a piece of ground was chosen by the British to be conceded to them by the Chinese Government, which had just promised, by the Treaty of Tientsin, to open Hankow to foreign trade. The concession is about half a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide. It is just below the native city, and was then so low-lying that it went under water at every high flood; it had been used for pig-hongs, and was not a very desirable

piece of ground. But it has been wonderfully improved by the English. They have had it all raised several feet with earth carried from the banks of the river; a fine bund, or parade, has been made, so that the water cannot encroach on the land; wide roads have been laid out, and planted with willows and plane trees; while large, handsome houses have been built, with shady verandahs and pretty little gardens.

But when Mr. Muirhead first visited Hankow none of these things were to be seen. What he did see were the great crowds of heathen in utter ignorance of the Gospel; and this moved him to write home and beg the Board to establish a Mission there as soon as possible.

Before an answer could come to this letter two of the Shanghai missionaries, Mr. John and Mr. Wilson, had started for Hankow. After a few days there Mr. John wrote home, "We are convinced that the L.M.S. ought to begin work here at once. We have rented a house, and hope in a fortnight, or thereabouts, to open the doors for daily preaching. We have been preaching and distributing books about the streets. The preaching is generally listened to attentively, and the books read eagerly and thankfully. If it be the will of the Directors to establish a Mission here, I shall be greatly rejoiced; if I am requested to proceed to some other part of the field, I am ready to obey."

Mr. John gave a graphic account of the unsettled state of the neighbourhood. He said, "The other day a large body of Hunan soldiers passed through this place. I called on some of the officers. One of them told me that he was truly sorry they had to pass through the place at all, because they might insult or injure foreigners. I told him that he had no need to fear as long as he kept them in subjection. 'But,' said he, 'that is the very thing we cannot do! They go about the streets and kick everything upside down; they enter shops and take things without paying for them, or pay just what they like; and the best thing we can do is to connive at the whole affair! As long as

they confine their freaks to the natives it matters not; but should they excite the ire of foreigners it would be a serious matter.' Such are the best soldiers of whom the Imperialists in this part of the country can boast."

After a short stay in Hankow Mr. John returned to Shanghai to fetch his family. He took the long voyage of 680 miles in a native boat. On the way they encountered a terrible squall, which threatened to engulf them all. The crew, with the exception of one man, gave up all for lost, and sat down in the bottom of the boat trembling all over. But the storm soon passed away, and they reached Shanghai in safety.

After a few days there Mr. John returned with his family, by steamer, to Hankow, and made his home in the native city, opening their hall every day for preaching. Two native assistants who had come from Shanghai with the missionaries took part in this work. Though many came to listen, most of the early enquirers were disappointing. A smart country boy of about eighteen presented Mr. John with a letter. On reading it he found that the lad wished to join the Church. So he advised him to come and listen to the daily preaching. The native preacher made enquiries, and found that some of the country people had got the impression that all who joined the Church were given some rice every day. So they had sent this boy to make the experiment; if he was successful, many of them would join too! Finding there was no rice to be had, the youth gave up coming to hear sermons, and soon disappeared altogether.

When a missionary finished preaching he was often asked, "How many cash does a man receive for entering the Church?" or, "If we become Christians, shall we get rice to eat?"

Before long a very great sorrow came upon the little mission circle at Hankow. Mr. Wilson was taken ill with dysentery. For eight days he gradually grew weaker, and on August 12th, 1863, he breathed his last. He left a widow and two little children. Before he died he said, "The Lord reigneth. I can leave them

with Him. If it were not so, it would be very hard indeed to leave them to this cold, cold world." He knew that he was dying, and, speaking of the river of death, he said, "The waters are not pleasant, but it is all singing beyond." His parting prayer for his beloved colleague, Mr. John, has surely been heard and answered, "May you have many, many souls as the crown of your rejoicing in that day!"

After his death Mrs. Wilson and the children went to England, and illness obliged Mrs. John to take her little ones home; so that Mr. John was left alone in the vast heathen city of Hankow—alone, and yet not alone, for He who commanded missionaries to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature followed His command with a promise—"Lo, I am with you alway."

The Saviour's presence and blessing must have been felt to be specially needed in the early days of the Hankow Mission, for there were many trials and disappointments. A doctor who was sent out to begin medical work there died on the way to China. Native assistants who had been brought from another province became homesick and returned. Some failed in character; this was the greatest sorrow of all. But despite all these difficulties the work went on. A chapel was built in the heart of the city, and candidates



GRAVE OF REV. R. WILSON.

were baptized and received into the Church. Some of those early converts were very warm-hearted Christians, and have proved faithful workers for many years. One is now our senior native preacher in Hankow. He was in business when I first knew him, but devoted all his spare time to preaching to the heathen. After awhile he gave up his business that he might spend all his time and strength in this work. He receives much less money as a preacher than he would have made by continuing in business; but he cares more for saving men than for making money.

Another of those early converts was the first native to be ordained as a Wesleyan minister in Central China. When Mr. Cox came to Hankow to begin the work of the Wesleyan Missionary Society there, Mr. John recommended this man to him as a teacher and helper. He came from another province, having fled to Hankow when the Tai Ping soldiers devastated his native district. When the troubles of the rebellion had quieted down, and the people began to return to their homes, his sincerity underwent a severe test. He was heir to the estates of his father and uncle, and would have been wealthy if put in possession of them. He laid his claim before the guild of his native province, and they considered it. They appointed a day for the hearing, and then said, "We have considered your claim, and have come to the conclusion that the property is yours, but before we can help you to get it you must give us a promise that you will cease worshipping the foreigners' God and give up faith in Jesus."

He said, "The property may go; I believe in Jesus, and shall worship Him all the days of my life."

After working for several years as a catechist, he was by a unanimous vote of the district meeting, passed on to the ordained ministry, and is labouring still as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ in the important city of Wuchang.

The work of preaching to the heathen has gone on steadily ever since missions began in Central China. The L.M.S. and the Wesleyan Society each has three chapels in Hankow, where

preaching is carried on for several hours every day, and a congregation always gathers as soon as the doors are opened. Of course, they are not regular services, such as we have in England. The heathen cannot sing hymns, they have never even heard the tunes; and they would not understand prayers; but preaching they can and do understand. So the missionaries, native evangelists, and voluntary helpers preach in turn; as soon as one stops another begins.

Some of the congregation sit and listen for hours together; others come in, look round, and walk out again at once. On a hot, tiring day some sit down, take off their shoes, put their feet on the seat in front of them, and go to sleep! Waking up after a time, they may find that their shoes are not there, and they naturally begin enquiring about them in a loud tone of voice.

Others gaze earnestly at the preacher, as if they were drinking in every word. But when he feels encouraged to ask them some simple question about what he has been saying, he is discouraged by their replying, "That I don't know! May I ask how much your coat cost?"

But missionaries like people to ask questions, for then they can tell better how much is being understood, and sometimes the questions are really helpful. Once when Mr. Foster had been talking about the difference between idolatry and worshipping the living God, a man in the congregation turned to him and said, "If God never became man, I should like to ask you how you can know anything about Him." It was not difficult, in answer to such a question, to speak of the revelation of Himself which God has given us in the person of His Son.

One day a man stopped the preacher in the middle of his sermon and said, "I have listened to you with interest. Now I should like to ask you a question. Will you tell me in few words what I am to do? I am a sinner, as you say. I am all wrong, I know. What I want to ask is, How am I to get right?" A question like that gives the missionary a fine opportunity of showing the way of forgiveness, and of a new life in Jesus Christ.

Sometimes a man noisily declares that the only gospel he wants is to be told how to make money and to enjoy himself. Or a proud scholar speaks disdainfully of a Saviour Who would go to such lengths as to lay down His life for men. He thinks self-sacrifice a great mistake; he would not sacrifice himself for any one, and he does not see any beauty in the love that led our Lord to Calvary.

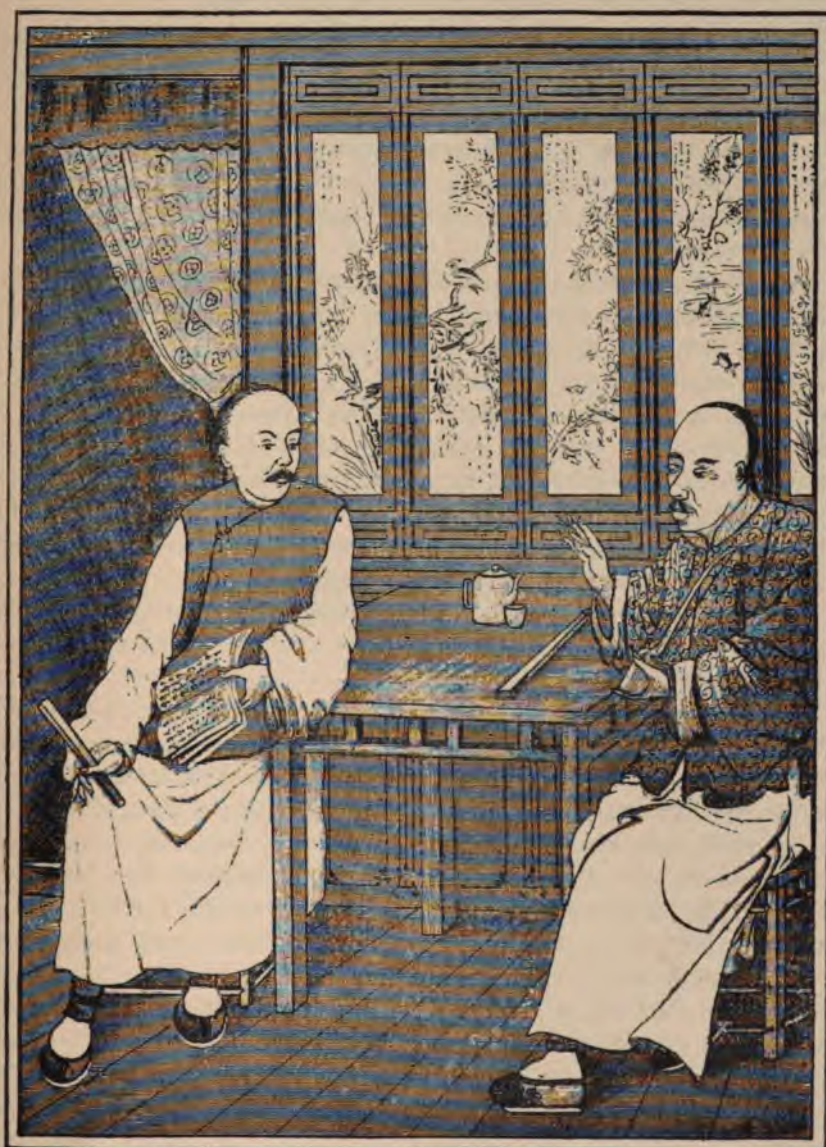
When men are really interested in what they hear in the chapels, they will come again and again. Sometimes when the preacher sees that they are interested he invites them into a little guest-room at the back of the chapel, where they can have a quiet talk over a cup of tea. This often leads to the confession that they believe in the truth of what they have heard, but that there are difficulties in the way of their coming forward for baptism. Often they will say that their parents have forbidden their becoming Christians. Not only children, but grown-up men and women, are expected to obey their parents in China; so this is a real difficulty, especially when an aged mother threatens to commit suicide if her son is baptized.

Others fear loss of employment if they become Christians; while others frankly state that they would like to join the Church if the missionary would promise to find them a good situation!

But many have been led by preaching and conversation in the little guest-room to give up all for Christ. In the early days of the Mission nearly all the converts were brought into the Church in this way.

Sometimes it is long before the results of the preaching are known. A few months ago one of our evangelists came in from his country district to Hankow and told the following story:—

"About twenty years ago Mr. John visited some converts in a village in his district. One of them was an old man named Yang, who seemed to be the most important person in the village. His granddaughter, a mere child at the time, saw the missionary and heard him preach. Years passed by, and she was married into



IN THE GUEST-HALL.

a heathen family who lived in the next county. She taught her husband what she knew of the truth, and when the native evangelist visited their village the young man wrote a letter for him to take to Mr. John, in which he says that he believes in Jesus and wishes to be baptized. With the letter he sent an idol, saying he had no further use for it, though it had been in his family for two hundred years."

And so the work goes on, and the light is spreading gradually around Hankow. Many of our native preachers are very earnest men and devoted Christians. Two years ago one of them gave striking evidence of his devotion to the work of the ministry. As a preacher he receives a salary of about £12 a year; on this he has to support his widowed mother, besides his wife and family. His brother-in-law, who was in a good position in Peking, wrote to offer him a Government appointment which would bring him in £120 a year. The preacher brought the letter to show to Dr. John, who asked him what he was going to do?

"Do?" said he. "We read in the Bible that Matthew left the receipt of custom to follow Christ. I am not going to leave Christ to join the customs!"

He did not mean that he would have to worship idols if he took that appointment; but he thought that to leave the high calling of a Christian preacher and to set before himself a lower ideal of life, for the sake of money, would be practically to leave Christ.

His wife looked at the matter in a very different light. She came to see me to beg me to get Mr. Foster to influence her husband not to act in such a foolish manner. Poor woman! I really pitied her. She said, "We hardly know how to make both ends meet on his present salary. There are five mouths to feed every day, and besides that he is always inviting inquirers to take a meal with us, that he may have further talk with them about the doctrine. Now if he took this appointment we should have plenty of money, and could give away a great deal. He could preach, too, in his leisure time, without taking any salary from the Society, and the

children could have a good education. Do try to persuade him not to throw away such a chance!"

While I sympathised with her in her difficulties, I could not help telling her that I was very thankful for the step her husband had taken, and that I was sure his influence as a preacher would be all the greater because of the sacrifice he had so cheerfully made.

She left me unconvinced, and made home so hot for her poor husband that he was glad to escape from it for awhile by taking a preaching tour among some of our country stations. By the time he returned the post was filled up, and peace was restored in the home.

The love of money is the besetting sin of most Chinamen, but the love of Christ can, and often does, expel that utterly. One of the most generous men I have ever known is a deacon in our Hankow Church. He is a printer, and not at all a rich man. He and his whole family live very simply; their house and dress are quite those of poor people. I should not think they ever spend £20 a year on themselves. But this deacon is a most liberal giver. Seven years ago he provided a large part of the money necessary for buying land and building a chapel in his native village. Last year he was very anxious for the L.M.S. to open a new chapel in a part of Hankow where no settled work has yet been done—a chapel where preaching would be carried on every day, and to which people would come who had never yet heard of the Gospel. He promised to give £80 towards this object if the Society would build a chapel in that neighbourhood. Before we left China he had paid over that sum to the treasurer, and we hope that English Christians will give the £400 that will be needed to buy the land and put up a suitable building, where the truth of Christ may be daily preached, so that a new centre of light may soon be shining in that dark quarter of a great heathen city.

Besides the daily preaching to the heathen, there are regular Sunday services for the Christians in two of our Hankow chapels, and in two belonging to the Wesleyans; the American Episcopalians

also hold regular services in their churches. Our largest chapel holds about 300, and is nearly always full. The women and girls sit on one side of the right aisle, and the men and boys have all the middle seats, besides those by the left aisle, set apart for them. So you see we have more men than women in our Hankow Church!

If you could peep in upon us some Sunday in summer, you would be amused at the number of fans waving all the time. Men, women and children all bring their fans to chapel. Some are round white silk fans, on which are written sentences from the classics, or texts from the Bible, or the verse of a hymn; some have very quaint paintings on them, which amuse the children. Sometimes men come into the chapel with a folded fan sticking out of the top of their coat behind, or a hospital patient will slouch in with his queue curled round his head and a fan stuck into it. But one of the Christians will promptly tell him to let his queue down. He is coming to worship God, and it is not reverent to come into the presence of a superior with the queue wound round the head.

Most of those present—nearly all, in fact—are Christians, and they reverently kneel down during prayer on little straw mats provided for the purpose, and they join heartily, if not melodiously, in the singing. There has been a very great improvement in that since Mr. Bonsey joined the Mission. He has held many singing classes, and the members of these take great delight in the hymns. A Chinese youth often plays the harmonium at the service, and does it very well too.

A native preacher reads the lessons, and as he closes the Bible he reminds the members of the Watchers' Band that "This week we pray for Africa," or "for India," as the case may be.

There is no talking or going in and out during this service, as there is during the preaching to the heathen. It is just like an ordinary service in a Christian land, only, of course, it is all conducted in Chinese. New missionaries may sometimes be seen taking notes of sentences, the meaning of which they wish to ask their seniors when the service is over; and very much encouraged

they feel when they are able to say for the first time, "I understood the whole of that sermon from beginning to end!"

In winter foot-warmers take the place of fans, for in Hankow we have frost and snow in winter and intense heat in summer. These little brass or earthenware foot-warmers are very convenient. Our chapels are not heated, and the concrete floor is very cold. Nearly all the women bring them to the services. They contain balls of fireclay in hot charcoal, and if they are occasionally stirred with a long hair-pin they give out heat for a long time. They are used to warm the hands as well as the feet, and are passed about from one to another for the benefit of those who have none of their own.

It is very encouraging to see the bright faces of these Christian women as they unfold their large handkerchiefs and take out their Testaments and hymn-books, joining in the services with as much interest as the men. I can remember the time when many of these joined the Church, poor, ignorant women, who could not read a word, but when they became Christians many of them wished to learn to read their Bibles, and so they attended classes, or got their husbands to teach them at home, and now we have a number of women in the Church who enjoy meeting together for Bible-reading and prayer; some of them are even members of the Watchers' Band. What a contrast there is between their lives and those of their heathen sisters, leading aimless, joyless lives in ignorance and superstition! We long for the day when all the women in China shall have been lifted up out of their darkness and misery into the light and liberty of the children of God.

But it is not as easy to reach the women as the men—they rarely come into the chapels to listen to the daily preaching. We have to get at them in other ways. We sometimes visit them in their homes, and so get opportunities for telling them the Gospel story. But it is not easy to get quiet—all the small children in the neighbourhood hear that a "foreign devil" is coming, and rush down the street after us, shouting. A good many of them follow

us into the house, and crowd the little room up uncomfortably. There are usually dogs and fowls walking about on the floor, and sometimes pigs as well. If the woman who lives there wishes to hear us "explain the good books," as the Bible-woman puts it, she will politely request us to be seated, and will soon offer us cups of tea. We have noticed a pond of very dirty water just outside the door, in which some women were washing vegetables, and others clothes, and as we feel sure that our tea has been made with water from that pond, we content ourselves with pretending to taste it, and go on with our discourse. Water is not laid on in China, and if a stagnant pool is rather nearer to the house than a clean river, those who have to carry the water prefer getting it from the pool to walking further to the river for their load. Sometimes the women listen attentively and beg us to come again, but after two or three visits they usually say that they are too busy to listen on the particular day we call. The neighbours have probably laughed at them, and said they were going to "eat the foreign religion," and they were not sufficiently in earnest to stand ridicule, or their husbands have forbidden them to listen to the missionary; and so they politely tell us that they have no leisure, and we pass on to another house.

I remember one nice, quiet visit I paid to a poor woman who lived on the city wall. A neighbour of hers, a Christian, came to ask me to call on her. I found the woman in bed, looking very ill. She told me that she had been trying to acquire merit for many years by being a vegetarian, but that her Christian neighbour had taught her about Jesus; so now she knew that her sins would not be forgiven because of any merit of her own, but only by trusting in the Saviour, and she asked me to pray with her. Very gladly I knelt down on the mud floor and commended her to the true God. The next morning her neighbour called to see me, and gave me a scroll, on which there was painted a picture of the Goddess of Mercy. She said the sick woman had worshipped this for twenty years, but now she believed in Jesus, and

so did not want her idol any more, but had sent it to me, as a sign that she had quite given up her idolatry. Her friend next showed me a few cash, which she said she was going to spend on a piece of pork, to make some soup for the sick woman. She wished to taste meat to show that she no longer believed that there was any merit in her vegetarianism. I could not help warning her neighbour that pork soup was not the best thing for a woman who was very ill and who had not tasted meat for many years, but she assured me that her friend thought it would do her good, and that same evening she called again to tell me she was the better for it. She did not live long, however, after my visit, and was never received into the visible Church on earth, but I believe that, ignorant and sinful though she was, the Christ Whom she trusted received her into Paradise.

We use various other ways besides preaching and visiting to bring the knowledge of God to the heathen in China, and I think the best of these is our medical mission; but that is such a large subject that I must leave it for another chapter.



ANOTHER RIVER BOAT.

CHAPTER X

ILLNESS, OPIUM, AND HOSPITALS

TWO years ago small-pox was unusually prevalent in Hankow. We always have an epidemic in the early part of the year, but there were more cases than usual in the spring of 1896. In one of our little day-schools three scholars died of it in a fortnight. One of the three was a remarkably clever little boy; he was only five years old, and came to the girls' school with an elder sister. He used to repeat several pages of his book every week when I visited the school. As a child living in the same house had a slight attack of small-pox, his mother thought it would be a good opportunity for him to catch the disease, so she put him in the same room with the sick child. But the poor little boy did not catch it slightly, and, after a short illness, he died, much to his mother's sorrow.

At that time I noticed several children with curious little cloth monkeys tied to their backs. They looked very comical, and, on inquiring the reason of this new fashion, I was told that the mothers of the children had made the monkeys, so that when the small-pox demon was prowling about it might enter the monkey and spare the child!

There is a special goddess of small-pox in China, and, as soon as the disease appears, she is worshipped with suitable offerings. On the ninth day of the illness, if the child is doing well, they present her with fish, meat, fowls, and vegetables; but if the child dies, she gets nothing. If there is a thunderstorm during the child's

illness, some one gets a gong or a drum, and makes as much noise as possible, so that the little patient shall not hear the thunder, for that would be considered very unlucky.

Friends and relations send the sick child cakes, sugar, dates, and other things; and if he recovers, his parents send presents to them in return. At the end of a month they again make a thank-offering to the goddess of small-pox for her kindness in restoring their son to health.

If any one is suddenly taken ill, this trouble is often said to be caused by some evil spirit, who must be expelled before the patient can expect to recover. Sometimes his friends call in a Taoist priest to do this. A table is placed in the lightest part of the bedroom, and on it are arranged three cups of wine, five kinds of fruit, a censer of incense, and a pair of candles. The priest rings a small bell while he utters charms. He sprinkles water on the sick man, and strikes the table with a stick. Then he produces three written charms: one is to be stuck up over the door, another worn by the sick man, and the third burnt, its ashes being mixed with hot water, and drunk by the patient. If, after all these performances, the sick man is no better, a member of his family goes to a temple and beats the drum to let the god know that there is urgent need for his services. He lights incense and candles, and prays for the recovery of the sick man.

Very often spiritual and physical aid are sought at the same time. Dr. Wilson, of the China Inland Mission, gives an interesting account of a case which he was asked to attend in Hanchung, a large city on the river Han, nearly a thousand miles above Hankow. This is Dr. Wilson's story:—"The patient was a man about forty. He has one little girl, who attends our mission school, and two wives, who would like to attend the women's class, but he will not let them. The previous day he had stabbed himself in three places, the only explanation being that the house was said to be haunted by a devil, and at night he could hear it moaning. Upon the night in question he heard it more than ever. This made

him so miserable that, in a fit of desperation, he seized a great knife and stabbed himself.

"The next thing was to hire a necromancer to come, who, by means of writing certain cabalistic characters on strips of yellow paper, is supposed to be able to ward off the approach of evil. Some of these papers are posted up over the lintels of the door, others are pinned on to the bed, and yet another is folded up very small, and pinned to the patient's clothes. This necromancer did not stop here, but proceeded, in his own crude way, to treat the wound by stitching it partly up, not with silk thread, but with the delicate fibres of the mulberry tree roots. This, however, he did so badly that when the patient coughed the wound gaped as before. Then he covered it all up with one of the universal black plasters of the appearance and consistency of tar spread on paper.

"They next sent for me at the patient's special request; and, of course, the first thing was to seek to undo all the mischief of bad treatment, removing, which was no easy matter, every vestige of the plaster, and stitching up the wound with carbolized silk.

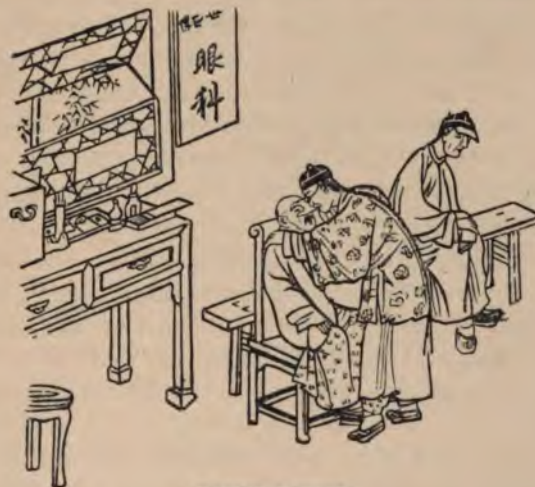
"Much prayer was made that he might recover, and that it might be the beginning of better days for the whole family. The Lord graciously answered prayer, and the case went on to complete recovery."

Dr. Wilson also writes about a soldier who had been made very seriously ill by a native doctor. He says:—

"One morning some men arrived from the camp, bringing a petty officer, who was suffering much. He had been in great pain for ten days from acute inflammation of the lower jaw. This was the result of the treatment he had undergone at the hands of the native doctors. Originally he had only suffered from a decayed tooth, but it was beyond their skill. The treatment he had been subjected to had simply resulted in setting up acute inflammation of the bone, with all its attendant suffering and danger. His mouth was firmly closed, and he could not open his jaws in the least. We took him into a private ward, with a servant-man he had brought

with him, and at once adopted a more rational line of treatment, which eventually resulted in an entire recovery."

Native doctors often do far more harm than good. They have no regular training in China, and any one who likes may set up as a physician. If a teacher, or a servant even, finds himself out of employment, it is not an uncommon thing for him to buy a few Chinese books on medicine, and put on a pair of large, round, wide-rimmed spectacles, to make him look as wise as an owl. Then he



NATIVE DOCTOR.

will hang out a signboard, and announce that he has set up as a doctor, and he will soon get patients. The medical books he has bought are full of very strange ideas. If he can afford it, he will get a very celebrated book in forty volumes. It is three hundred years old, and contains nearly two thousand prescriptions, besides a great deal of curious information about the animal and vegetable kingdoms. For instance, under the word "horse" you will find the following, "The heart of a white horse, when dried and rasped into wine and so taken, cures forgetfulness; if the patient hears one

thing, he knows ten!" "Horse flesh should be roasted and eaten with ginger and pork; to eat the flesh of a black horse, and not drink wine with it, will surely produce death." It is interesting also to note that "if a monkey is kept in the stable, the horse will not fall sick"!

It is asserted, too, that rats change into quails and quails into rats again during the eighth month. But I cannot tell you one-hundredth part of the nonsense talked by Chinese doctors, who look very learned, and discuss the influence of the five planets and the five elements on the five parts of the body. Happily they have learnt something by experience, and do know some simple remedies, but of surgery they are quite ignorant. Dr. Gillison, who has been for some years in charge of the London Mission Hospital at Hankow, gives an instance of this. He says, "A man came to the hospital with a splint of bamboo an inch long buried in his thumb. In less than three minutes he was relieved of that which had cost him several sleepless nights and days of pain. When the simple operation was over, he said, 'Thank you, sir, thank you! I have come two hundred miles to have this done.' None of the native doctors could perform such a simple operation as that, and there is an awful amount of suffering every day in China through lack of surgical skill."

Patients often come very long distances to mission hospitals, and, as they have no idea what diseases can be cured and what cannot, of course, they are sometimes much disappointed. When a dutiful son has brought his old mother a fortnight's journey on a wheelbarrow, and then carried her into the hospital on his back, it is very sad to have to tell him that, as she has been hopelessly blind for years, not even the English doctor can do anything for her. Some neighbour of theirs has been operated on for cataract, and they think if the doctor could cure him, surely he could also cure this old woman if he only would. Sometimes the patients go down on their knees before the doctor, knocking their heads on the floor, and imploring his help. Their faith in foreign surgeons

is quite touching. I remember Dr. Gillison being asked to visit some one who was already dead; his friends thought that, as the body was still warm, he might be able to bring him to life again.

The Chinese bear pain very well. A Wesleyan missionary, Dr. Wenyon, gives an interesting account of an operation he once performed in South China. He says:—

“A member of our Church at Fatshan came to me for an operation, to remove a morbid growth from his arm. The action of his heart was weak, and I did not like to give him chloroform, so I asked him if he could bear the operation without it.

“‘I am afraid of pain,’ he said; ‘but I will try and bear it if you will let me sing.’

“‘Oh, sing away,’ I said, ‘as much as you like.’

“I began to operate, and the patient began to sing in the Chinese version:—

“‘There is a gate which stands ajar,
And through its portals gleaming
A radiance from the Cross afar,
The Saviour's love revealing.
O depth of mercy! can it be
That gate was left ajar for me?’

“I performed the operation on the singing man without any interruption, for he never flinched.”

A great many people try to commit suicide in China. If their relations find out that they have swallowed poison, they will bring them to the mission hospital, if there is one near enough.

In one year Dr. Gillison saw thirty cases of attempted suicide; twenty-five of these had swallowed opium. He was able to save twenty-two of them; some of the others were dead before he saw them. On asking why they had wished to put an end to their lives, he was told that twenty-five out of the thirty did so because of a quarrel. Dr. Gillison says:—

“Life is thrown away here more often from motives of revenge than of despair. The wife quarrels with her husband, or is chided

for some trivial expenditure; he goes out to work, and returns to find his wife dying or dead. She has procured and swallowed opium in his absence. She is revenged! The husband will be put to considerable expense for a funeral, will be dunned by her relatives, and will have still further trouble and expenditure in procuring another domestic drudge."

Besides cases of opium suicide, many opium smokers come to the mission hospitals to be cured of the craving for that drug. The most hopeful of these are men who have been converted, and who wish to break off what they know to be a sinful habit. This is a necessary step, too, before they can be admitted to Church fellowship in China. Others come because they are poor, and can no longer afford to buy opium enough to satisfy the craving for it; and others are persuaded to come by their relations, who long for them to turn over a new leaf. For, whatever English people may say about the harmlessness of opium smoking, the Chinese all admit that it is a very bad habit, and that it leads men down an easy path to utter ruin. I have seen several Chinese tracts warning people against the use of opium. The writers of them were not Christians, and had never met missionaries; but they wrote as those who longed to save their fellow-countrymen from the downward path of wickedness and misery, the first step along which is so often, in China, the use of the opium pipe. I will give you a translation of part of one of these tracts, called *A Meeting Between Prodigals*:—

"My father was a man who did many good deeds, and he was anxious to have a son to perpetuate his name and family, and to bury him when he died. I was well off, but I did not care for what was good. To fast living and gambling I added opium smoking. At first the craving for the drug was slight and easily satisfied; but the more I smoked the greater the craving became, until it grew insatiable. I squandered my money, dressed like a lord in silks and satins, and in the top of the fashion. For opium I scattered my family wealth, and threw away my inheritance. In order to smoke opium I sold my position, and others got it. In



AN OPIUM DEN.

order to smoke opium I parted with my house. At first I pawned my clothes, but with fear of the disgrace. Then I pawned all things in the house on which I could lay my hands; and the sense of shame had gone. Now I have nothing left to me but a pair of hands. Everything is sold, and I look out for chickens and dogs that I can steal. Then I think of turning robber, but I fear going to prison. I think up and down, but no way is open to me. I may as well hang myself, and take a short road out of life. I want to sacrifice to my ancestors, but I have nothing to sacrifice. I would pray them to help me to give up opium altogether. Once I was regarded as the descendant of a wealthy family, now I am nothing but a living monkey. I have formed a resolution. I must wander about and beg; but I have bound myself by a curse before Heaven that I will get cured of opium."

Another of these tracts says: "For the sake of opium men alienate their friends, they kill their old parents with grief, they get separated from their wives, and give up all care for their children. The drug has smoked millions of young men to death. Opium friends are like lictors sent by the gods of the lower world to hurry men to their end. Opium is like a deadly poison, and if you don't take care it will cost you your life. Opium smokes men muddled and stupid. It smokes their livers black, and their faces like the face of the kitchen-god. Opium smokes men as thin as a piece of firewood, and turns them either black or yellow. I would advise you not to get entangled with it. Just look what the consequences are to the smoker!"

I must give you one more quotation from a curious book called *Foreigners Bringing Tribute*. It represents the early intercourse between Europe and China as the bringing of tribute by barbarian tribes to the Chinese Emperor. The foreigners brought all sorts of curious and valuable things that the Chinese had never seen before,—clocks, watches, woollen cloth, etc.,—and Chinese merchants from all quarters came to buy them. At last these barbarians produced a curious black-looking substance, which they said possessed valuable

qualities, and they showed the Chinese how to prepare and use it. The Emperor, Tao-Kwang, was persuaded to accept it, and gave some to his subordinate officials. They tried it, and were delighted with their first experience of the effects of smoking. Under its influence they imagined themselves wafted through mists and clouds to heaven itself. "So," the book says, "the people at large are easily befooled, and they fell blindly into the trap which these robbers (*i.e.*, the English) had set for them. Like some large fish that has swallowed a hook, they could not escape. Those who smoked for long were in evil case, their families were ruined, their inheritances were squandered, and it was all up with them. If for one day they did not smoke, they became ill, their whole body became weak, their head dizzy, and they were like to die. This scheme for injuring people was complete; it was killing men in the dark without using a knife."

When we missionaries think how opium was introduced into China we feel very sad, but we try to do what we can to undo the evil. A number of confirmed opium smokers have been cured at different mission hospitals and refuges. Many of these fall back again into the habit, it is true, and unless they have been converted we never feel sure that they will stand in the hour of temptation. They suffer very much while they are breaking off the habit, and it is sometimes impossible to induce them to stay till the cure is complete. Patients in most mission hospitals have to pay for their food; in Hankow the charge is sixty cash, about three-halfpence, a day. Those who come to be cured of opium smoking have to pay down a lump sum of nine hundred cash when they enter, on the understanding that if they leave before the fifteen days, which the cure is expected to take, are over, they will not have any of this money returned to them. This helps them to persevere, and not leave the hospital when the craving becomes very great and the pain almost unbearable. If they stay the full time, the cure is complete.

Of course, while there they hear the Gospel story. There are daily prayers in the hospital chapel—with not merely reading and

prayer, but a short, simple sermon such as heathen listeners may be expected to understand. Missionaries and native helpers also visit the wards, and these opium smokers are particularly glad of visitors, who will help to turn their thoughts away from the pain they are suffering. Many of these men have professed faith in Christ, and, after being kept waiting for some time to make sure that they will not fall back into opium smoking, they have been received into the Church.

It is not only the in-patients who hear the good news of the Gospel; while the out-patients are waiting to see the doctor they sit and listen to the preaching. The men gather in a mission-chapel and the women in the waiting-room of the little women's hospital; for I am thankful to say that a special hospital for women was opened some years ago and a lady doctor appointed to Hankow.

Let us take a peep into the waiting-room and talk to the women. There are about forty, most of them quite poor, wearing coarse, cotton trousers and jackets; the older women seem to like dark blue clothes best, but several of the girls have red trousers and gay jackets. Many of them have a piece of black crape tied round their heads, and their hair is very untidy; this is because they are ill. Some of them have a bruise, too, on the bridge of their nose, where the skin has been well pinched to cure a headache.

I will not describe the terrible sores and tumours, far worse than any to be seen in English hospitals. Poor little girls, too, are often brought with "spoilt feet"; they have been badly bound, and are suffering greatly. Here is a little child with a broken arm, sobbing quietly; it was broken some days ago, but her mother has only just heard of the foreign doctor who can set broken bones.

Another girl, looking very wild, as if she had just come in from the country, sets up a howl at the sight of us.

"Don't be afraid," I say; but she howls the more. And the women smilingly explain that the child thinks that I am the doctor, and that I shall take out her eyes!

For Chinese mothers hold us up to their children as bogies, to

frighten them with when they are naughty, threatening, "If you are not good, I will give you to the foreign devil, and he will take your eyes out!"

A good many of the mothers know no better than the children, and really believe that we want their eyes and hearts to make our medicines. So it is no wonder that little girls often cry at the sight of the dreaded foreigner.

Just as we have quieted that child a woman comes in, and kneeling on the floor, knocks her head on the ground, begging me to save her from blindness. It takes some time to make her understand that I am not the doctor; and now, at last, we can begin our little sermon. A very strange sermon you would think it. It is carried on chiefly by questions and answers.

"Have you eaten your rice to-day?"

"Yes, thank you. Have you eaten yours?"

And then I go on to talk of the Father in heaven, Who sends the rain and sunshine, and makes the rice to grow, and of how we ought to thank Him.

"We do not need money to worship God. He does not want us to light incense-sticks and candles; He wants our hearts. But we are sinners, and are not worthy to worship Him. Do you know how we can get our sins forgiven?"

Here some old woman will generally answer,—

"By being vegetarians!"

For, as I told you before, Buddhists, who believe in the transmigration of souls, think it is wrong to kill animals and to eat meat.

Then I tell them of Jesus, the Divine Saviour, and of how He died for our sins, and how trusting in Him we may be forgiven.

By this time some of the younger women are tired of listening quietly, and will begin to ask me questions.

"How many children have you?"

"How old are you?"

"Why don't you wear ear-rings?"

"Does the sun shine in your country?"

"Did you make your own dress?"

"How much did that stuff cost a yard?"

Then an old patient will tell them to be quiet, and to listen, adding, "She is telling us to be good."

And I resume the thread of my discourse, and tell them that I am not only exhorting them to be good, but am showing them a way by which they may be made good.

And so the talk continues for half an hour or more, and then the Bible-woman produces a bundle of tracts, and urges the women to buy them.

Several of them laugh, and say, "We can't read!"

But one says, "My son can read. How much are they?"

"This small one is only four cash."

So the cash are counted out, and the tract carefully wrapped up in a pocket-handkerchief, to be carried to the country home, to the son who is a scholar.

And so day by day the seed is sown by spoken word and written page, and God, Who said, "My word shall not return unto Me void," will see that in due time there shall come the harvest.

A number of our Hankow Christians first heard the Truth while at the hospital. It was opened in 1866. Since then every year thousands of patients have been seen, while hundreds have stayed as in-patients for a longer or shorter time. All, we hope, have gone away with some knowledge of the Gospel.

The workers change, but the work goes on, and you must not think that the only results of our medical missions are direct conversions and the healing of diseases. Much has been done to inspire confidence, and to make missionaries welcome in the districts from which patients have come.

Dr. Wenyon gives an interesting account of the advantage of meeting with old patients when in unpleasant surroundings. He says: "We walked for a considerable distance along the banks of the river, and at length came to a large town, which we entered.

The people crowded round us in a most menacing manner, and the cry, 'Kill the barbarian devils!' was heard on every hand. A tradesman standing in the doorway of his shop caught sight of us struggling through the mob towards the river, and at once called out, 'Dr. Wenyon!' 'What!' I said, 'do you know me?' 'I should think I do,' he replied; 'you cured my arm at the hospital in Fatshan. Come in and have a cup of tea.' That simple episode acted like a spell, and changed at once the conduct of the mob from riot and ridicule to order and respect, and we got safely to our boats."

Old patients often show their gratitude in touching ways, by little offerings which they can ill afford to make. Some years ago, soon after Dr. Mackenzie left our Hankow hospital for work in Tientsin, Mr. David Hill, of the Wesleyan Mission, met one of his former patients. I will give you the account in Mr. Hill's own words: "On one of my recent boat journeys on the Yangtse, I put in about dusk at a market town. I had no sooner finished preaching on shore than a man rushed after me on to the boat, with hands full of peaches, which he pressed me to accept. I told him that I was not aware that I had done anything to warrant my taking them; but he would hear of no refusal. 'You are from Hankow, are you not?' said he. 'Yes,' I replied. 'Well, you will probably not remember me,' he added, 'but a few years ago I went up to your hospital there, very ill indeed, and had it not been for Dr. Mackenzie I certainly should not have lived. And not only so, but when my money was exhausted he supported me for a whole month, and both he and the native assistants treated me with so much kindness that when I saw you here, knowing as I did that you must be connected with the Mission, I thought the least that I could do was to give you some slight acknowledgment of the kindness shown me at Hankow. I am but a poor man, but I shall be only too glad if you will accept these peaches.' And feeling hardly satisfied with this expression of gratitude, though a very poor man, he brought me later in the evening a further present

of peaches and sweetmeats, to show how grateful he was for the kindness he had received."

Dr. Gillison frequently gets presents of fowls and eggs and other little things from grateful patients.

But best of all is it when they learn to show their gratitude, not to the missionary only, but to God Himself. A very common answer among the Christians in Hankow, when asked how they are, is, "Thanks to the grace of God, I am quite well."

I remember soon after I went to China being asked by a woman for a dose of quinine for her granddaughter, "Lotus-flower." I mixed it with water, and handed it to the child. "Say grace first," said the Christian grandmother, and the girl reverently bowed her head and uttered a long prayer, asking God to bless the medicine to her use, and also to forgive her sins, and influence her heart by His Holy Spirit. When the prayer was finished she thanked me prettily for the medicine, and swallowed the bitter draught without a murmur. I wonder whether all my young readers take their medicine quite as thankfully as "Lotus-flower"?



AN OPIUM PIPE.



BOYS' SCHOOL IN WUCHANG.

CHAPTER XI

SCHOOL-CHILDREN

I HAVE told you something about Chinese schools in the fourth chapter, "Entering the Dragon Gate," but I want to tell you now about our Mission schools. Wherever missionaries have gone all along the valley of the Yangtse they have started Christian schools, where the children not only learn to read and write, but are also taught about the love of God and the happiness of trusting in Christ.

Let us pay a visit to the oldest girls' school in Central China. As our footsteps are heard approaching the schoolroom, the little scholars raise their voices and shout out their lessons louder than ever; that is to let us know how industriously they are studying. But as we open the door they all stop shouting and rise to their feet, respectfully addressing the missionary as "Teacher-mother"; and they remain standing till we are seated at the top of the room.

The teacher, dear old Mrs. Kao, receives us with a smile. She was the first woman to be baptized in Central China, and has done good service in the Church ever since. She has often told me how hard it was at first to come to the Sunday services, how she was reviled and abused for attending a meeting where nearly all the rest of the little congregation were men. The heathen laughed at her, and said she was going to be stared at by the foreign devils; but she had learnt to fear God more than man, and persisted in her regular attendance at the House of God.

More than thirty years ago Mrs. John opened a little girls' school with Mrs. Kao for its teacher, and though somewhat old and feeble, she still carries it on, with the help of her granddaughters. Some of her little scholars are the children of former pupils, and many of our younger Christian women look up to her as having been their teacher.

After a few friendly words to her we open the register, and call up the girls, one by one, to say their lessons. We shall miss the girl who has come up first for ten years—the teacher's eldest grandchild, dear, bright "Phoenix Orchid"—for last autumn she was called away to the Happy Land, about which she loved to sing. She is greatly missed at the school, for she was her grandmother's right hand, and for some years had done much of the teaching, besides learning her own lessons. She could repeat by heart all four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, several of the Epistles and all the Psalms, besides several other Christian books. She was wonderfully well on in arithmetic too, for a Chinese girl, being able to do the four simple rules quickly and well; in this, as well as in geography, she was far

ahead of her teacher! She wrote a touching letter, which did not reach me till after her death, in which she said that she was not very well, but her heart was at peace; and she told me how she missed me, and prayed for me every day. Soon after receiving that letter I got one from her sister, "White Orchid," telling of her death. I will translate part of her letter for you to read. She writes, "'Phœnix Orchid,' whom you, Teacher-mother, loved—that is, my dear elder sister,—was taken away by God at 4 o'clock on the first day of the tenth month. She was suddenly taken very ill, and in five minutes she had left this world. The day before she had been to the working-party, and in the evening she sang a hymn, and prayed, and went to sleep; she was not ill then. The doctor says it was heart disease, but I know that it is God's will, and is all right. But, alas for us! we are all very sorrowful: it is hard to part with her." To her grandmother the loss is very serious; but "White Orchid" does what she can to take her place. She is a quiet, good girl, with only one eye. Her grandmother told me she was waiting to betroth her till the doctor could get her a glass eye, which would improve her appearance.

She comes up first now to repeat her lesson. Handing the book politely with both hands, she turns her back and repeats a chapter out of St. Matthew's Gospel, and then shows the sums she has done since my last visit. "White Orchid" is fifteen now. I was very glad to hear that she and seven other girls joined the Church in Hankow at the beginning of this year. When she has taken her seat again we will call up the other scholars, one by one—Azure Orchid, Elegant Brightness, Chrysanthemum, Golden Lotus, Bright Elegance, Great Spring, Little Spring, Hoping for a Younger Brother, Obedient Righteousness, Valuable Brightness, Little Possessions, Having a Younger Brother, Complete Virtue, Gracious Gift, Fountain of Life, Jewelled Epidendrum, Bright Phœnix, Seventy, Grace Glory, Precious Jewel, and a few more. Each of them repeats her lesson, and then they come out in classes to explain what they have been learning, for our Mission schools are different from the native schools in

this, that we want the children to understand something of what they learn from the very beginning.

Very wild answers the new-comers give to questions about "Peep-of-day." I remember a lesson on the Creation, when I vainly tried to make them think. The one idea they had got into their heads since they came to school was that God made everything; so that when I asked, "Who made this table?" instead of answering, "The carpenter," as I expected, they said, "God." It was a long time before I could get out of them that it was made of wood; and when I asked where wood came from they all said they did not know! I asked them if they had never seen a tree? and they said, "Never." "Well," I said, "if instead of going out of the school-house door that leads into the Chinese street you go out of the other gate into the English road, there are a number of trees there. Have you never seen those?"

One little girl, named Virtuous, drew herself up, and looked the pink of propriety as she said, "We girls do not go out!"

She lived close to the school, and those few steps in the native street were allowable, as she could not get to school without taking them, but to go for a walk, and on the English road too, would have been very shocking in her eyes.

When we have heard all the lessons and rise to leave, the children all stand up and say, "Teacher-mother, we have treated you disrespectfully!" And as soon as we have closed the door behind us they begin shouting their books again till the time comes to close school with prayer; after which the little scholars wrap their books up in large handkerchiefs, and come up one by one to the desk to bow to the teacher, and then go home. Many of them are fetched by their mothers, who knock at the door or shout through the window, "Jewel! rice is ready!" Jewel shouts out her response; and even if school is not over, she wraps up her books, bows, and departs.

Till last year we had a blind girl at this school. Her name is Love, but the teacher gave her "Golden Lotus" for a school-name. Poor little Love lost her mother when she was very small, and, as

she was blind, her life was anything but a happy one. Her father was a Christian, but very poor. He used to leave her with a neighbour while he went out to work; but the neighbour's children were very unkind. They amused themselves by slapping the poor little blind girl in the face, because she could not see to slap back. They were heathen children, of course, and had never heard the Gospel of love and pity. Her father came to us about his child, and we arranged to board her in a Christian family, where she could go to school every day. Love soon lost her scared, miserable expression, and quite enjoyed her school life. She learned to repeat two of the Gospels, and a great many hymns, and then we heard that the Wesleyans at the other end of the city could teach her to read and write by feeling and pricking the words; and so she is now living with them. Not long ago I received a happy letter from her which she had pricked herself and got a friend to copy out in Chinese characters for me to read. Her father died some time ago, and, but for the Christian Church, Love would have been left alone in the world to suffer and sin. As it is, kind friends in England pay £4 a year for her support, and that covers all expenses.

I wish you could pay a visit to the Wesleyan school for blind boys. They not only learn to read and write there, but to knit socks and make baskets and all sorts of useful things. Some of the lads can play the harmonium, and they are all fond of singing. As a rule blind men in China make their living by fortune-telling or begging. There are no asylums to take them in, except the two or three started by Christian missionaries; so these are very much needed indeed.

The Wesleyans have day-schools too for boys and girls, very much like those of the L.M.S.; so quite a number of children in Hankow are growing up with some knowledge of Gospel truth. Some of these little pupils are the children of Christians; they have never worshipped idols, but were brought when babies to the chapel to be baptized. Quaint little creatures they looked with their round black eyes, shaved heads, and bright-coloured garments, as their proud

young fathers held them in their arms, while the missionary asked, "Do you wish to present this child to God?" and one after another answered, "Yes, I present him to God"; and the missionary baptized them into the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.



WESLEYAN BLIND SCHOOL, HANKOW.

And when the children get to be three or four years old their mothers often bring them that I may hear them repeat the Doxology:—

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

In many a Chinese home there are family prayers; and the little ones soon learn to pray too. When they are six or seven they are

sent to school, if they live near enough; but the hardest time comes for them, I think, when they are old enough to earn something, and have to leave the Christian school, and perhaps be apprenticed to a heathen master. For not many of our Christians are rich enough to employ assistants, and so the lads have to be sent to heathen workshops. Then they are expected to work all Sunday, and can never get to the services, and, worse still, they are often told to light the incense before the idols, and that involves heathen worship, which they know is sin.

I remember one boy; his name was Obtain Forest. I suppose the idea was that he would take a good degree, and obtain a place in the "Forest of Pencils." He used to come to one of my girls' schools with his sister, Gold, when he was a little boy. As he grew older he went to the boys' school, and then, after some years, he went to serve a heathen master. He was told to light the incense-sticks before the god of wealth; but Obtain Forest was not going to do that! He told his master that he was a Christian, and only worshipped the one true God, and could not bow down to an idol. He was only a little fellow; but he had the best sort of courage, and though his master beat him, he would not light that incense-stick. His father was a Christian, and when he heard about it he took the boy away and found him another situation where he was not persecuted because he would not worship idols. The lad is dead now, and has gone to that bright place where he may serve God day and night in His Temple.

A little girl who came to school at the same time that he did was called Golden Phœnix. When she was about twelve years old her mother died, and as her father was a coolie in a foreign house, he did not know what to do with the child. Before he became a Christian he had betrothed her to a boy living in the country; so he decided to send her off at once to her future home, that she might be brought up as a little daughter-in-law. I shall never forget her coming to bid me good-bye. She was going to live among strangers whom she had never even seen, and all of them were heathen. Poor

child! she told me she was going to teach them all about Jesus Christ, and that they must not worship idols, and asked me so simply to pray for her after she had gone. That I have done now for many years; but I have never been able to find out whether her faith stood firm, or whether her heathen relatives succeeded in getting her to worship idols.

Another girl in whom I was much interested is called Grace Glory. When I first knew her she was a miserable, half-starved little thing. Her parents were Christians, but were very poor indeed, and lived in a country village where no one seemed to have quite enough to eat. Her father was an earnest believer, but not always very wise. One day he got into an argument with a Buddhist priest, who had the worst of it, and became very angry, and set upon the poor Christian, beating him and breaking some of his ribs. He had to go into the hospital, and while he was there we promised to help his family. Finding how very poor they were, we offered to take Grace Glory and pay for her food at one of our schools. So she came to live with the Christian teacher, and getting enough to eat, soon became fat and bonny. She was a clever girl, and got on well with her books, knowing more of her Bible than even Phoenix Orchid. Both her parents died while she was at school; so we arranged for her marriage, betrothing her to a Christian youth, who was assistant at the Hiaokan Hospital. He was only too pleased to get a clever, good-looking bride for nothing! Of course they were married with a Christian ceremony, in one of the L.M.S. chapels. It would be too much to expect a Chinese bride to say "I will" in public, but a bow of assent does just as well. I have seen a shy bride assisted in this matter by the old women who supported her forcibly bowing her head for her! But Grace Glory was not remarkable for her shyness. A few days after the wedding she wrote me a letter, which I think will interest you, so I will translate the whole of it:—

"To Teacher-mother, Mrs. Foster, true happiness! Thanks to the grace of God and to your kindness I have been nourished and

educated, and am now grown up; my thanks are unutterable! Now I am sending a letter to announce to you that on the 18th instant I was married in Hankow; on the 19th we went on board the boat, and on the 21st we arrived at Hiaokan. (It is forty miles from Hankow to Hiaokan.) Now we are in Hiaokan my parents-in-law treat me as if I were their own daughter, and my husband as if I were his younger sister. Thanks be to God, we are all well. Now I am in Hiaokan I constantly think of you, but I cannot see your face. May God keep you in peace; this is my hope. Please wish all the pastors and Christians true happiness. Liu Grace Glory wrote this."

But our scholars are not all the children of Christians; most of them come from heathen homes, and it is very difficult for them to break with idolatry altogether. Several of these have told me that they never worship idols, but pray to God night and morning, and always say grace before meals. This is not easy; they have not bedrooms to themselves where they can pray quietly, and they sit down to meals with their heathen mother and sisters. If any of you are tempted to give up kneeling to pray and saying grace because those about you are leading godless lives, I hope you will remember these Chinese school-children in their heathen homes.

One of them, Valuable Orchid, pleased me very much. She asked if she might give up learning the ordinary Chinese school-books and only learn the Bible; she wanted to learn all she could of it while she was at school. She is married now to a heathen husband, and lives far away from the chapels and schools; but two or three times, when she has been on a visit to her mother, she has called on her old teacher, and I hope she is still quietly worshipping God.

Girls in China cannot come forward for baptism when all their relations are heathen. But sometimes they are the means of leading some of these to a knowledge of the Truth. One bright girl, named Needle, told her mother what she learnt at school, and got her to visit the Christian school-teacher, and after some time Needle and her widowed mother were baptized together.

But a great many of our little scholars are very ignorant, and I fear they often worship idols with their mothers. I want you to pray for them, and for the thousands of children in Mission schools all over the heathen world, that their hearts may be touched, and that they may be brave and true to confess Christ before men, and that they may be used of Him to bring their parents into the light of the Gospel.

Every January, when the schools break up for the New Year holidays, the girls have their treat. The examinations come first, and they must all be prepared to repeat anything that they have learnt during the year. We start them off with a few words, and they go on till they are stopped and started again in another part of the book. I have a list before me of what they learnt one year. One girl said forty-three Psalms, another twenty chapters of Proverbs and fourteen chapters of St. Matthew, another said twenty-one chapters of St. Luke, and a short book on the history of the Apostles, while some of the little scholars only learnt part of an easy primer. The more they have learnt and the more perfectly it is said the more marks they get, and then they have the first choice of the prizes. These are spread out temptingly on a large table, and the children gaze at them while they drink their tea and eat their cakes; only they do not always eat the cakes, but more often wrap them up in their handkerchiefs to take home.

The choice of prizes is always amusing; the dolls go first, especially if they are large and dressed in bright colours. Girls of sixteen and boys of eight, they all choose dolls if they can; then work-bags, mittens, and scrap-books are critically examined, and chosen one by one. Every child expects something, and I often wish the English children, who dress the dolls and make the scrap-books, could come to our treat and see the happy faces of their proud possessors.

In Hankow the Mission schools are all elementary, and most of the scholars are quite little children; but across the river, in Wuchang, the Wesleyans have a college where older students come



DOLL PARADE.

to learn Western sciences and mathematics. Mr. Barber, its first principal, wrote an amusing account of the beginning of the work. He said, "The College of a Generous Education is situated on the main street of Wuchang. The house had been previously in the occupation of an expectant mandarin, and we at once set to work to decorate the guest-room in accordance with native ideas. By the help of Chinese scrolls, pictures, and silken lamps, together with excellent charts of astronomy and natural philosophy, the room was made really handsome, and ready for its guests. The neighbours were invited to a feast, and appeared exceedingly friendly; the doors were then thrown open, and we awaited results. The guest-hall was at once crowded. The first few days guests came by the hundred. There were many, of course, of the baser sort, who stole what trifles they could lay their sleeves over, but there were many more of the literary class; a few came in their official dress, thereby intimating their readiness to receive return calls. The general form of inquiry was, 'In how many days can I learn mathematics?' and even our oft-repeated declarations failed to convince many that a month or two at the outside would not be quite enough to make an erudite mathematical scholar of the dullest.

"The first day brought seven students; the end of the month saw twenty-two. Half of these characteristically gave up the pursuit after the first month; but the applications for admission next month promise to be more numerous than we can admit. It is not a little amusing to hear graduates gravely discussing the magic power of such methods as multiplication and division. The pupils range in age from seventeen to thirty, though we have had to refuse some of sixty, and urge them to send their grandsons; a few are mandarins' sons; one or two are themselves small officials; but as a whole there are fewer of the upper classes than had been hoped. It has been necessary firmly to resist repeated solicitations to teach astrology, and the head-master is expected to be omniscient and an expert, from predicting the future to assaying unknown metals opening mines, constructing telegraphs, and making machines."

Since Mr. Barber wrote this the college has grown considerably, and has become a power for good in Wuchang.

There are several other colleges in the valley of the Yangtse, and boarding-schools, both for boys and girls, where a better education can be given than in the day schools; these belong chiefly to American societies. The largest are in Shanghai, but there are others at Chinkiang, Nanking, Kiukiang, and Chungking, and we hope that before long the L.M.S. will have one in Hankow.



A LITTLE CHINESE SCHOLAR.



A BIT OF WUCHANG, SHOWING THE NEW L.M.S. CHAPEL.

CHAPTER XII

BRANCHING OUT

WHILE work has been going on steadily in the chapels, hospitals, and schools in Hankow, it has also been extending into the neighbouring cities and towns and through the country in every direction. In 1864 the L.M.S. began work in Wuchang, and it has been going on there ever since. Wuchang is a very important city; it is the capital of the province, and a great many officials and influential men live there. During the examinations the city is crowded with students from all parts of the province, and missionaries of different societies unite to distribute Christian books and tracts before they leave the city. Last year ten

thousand packages of books were given in this way. I am sure you would like to read Mr. Cousins's account of the distribution. He says:—

"The city is still very full. Our ordinary population is 200,000, but with the students and visitors there are quite 20,000 more these days. Our chapel has been constantly full during the month. As usual, we distributed 10,000 packages of books to the students as they were leaving the examination hall. This involved a night of faithful watching and working. Six of us foreigners and thirty natives assembled on Saturday evening at five o'clock in the L.M.S. chapel, and after two short prayers and the Doxology we set to work. The natives took up positions at the three exits from the halls, and we remained in our chapel, prepared to do anything we could to cheer and help them. Every hour or so, one or two of us paid visits to the men. It was a long, weary night of expectancy, the silence broken only by the weird howl of the dogs and a passing watchman now and then. Unfortunately, we were disappointed; having watched all night we distributed nothing—the doors were only opened at about 8.15 a.m. Then business was very brisk, and during the next hour or so many hundreds of books were given to the retiring students. Every student at this test was a B.A. The most awkward part of the whole business was that we had not a remote idea as to the time they would come out! The doors are opened when there are sufficient ready to leave. They are opened three times, and generally during the night; but this year it was morning before they were opened. However, we had a capital night, and managed to enjoy ourselves. We were all, without exception, dead beat. The small officials were most courteous, and the soldiers protected us manfully. We pray that the 10,000 packages may do much good."

On these occasions books are given as presents, but as a rule we *sell* our tracts and Scripture portions in China. Over a million are sent out from Hankow alone every year, and carry the good news of the Gospel far and wide, often in most unexpected ways.

Some years ago a tract found its way into the basket of a waste-paper collector, and was being carried away to be burnt, when a shopkeeper caught sight of it, rescued it from destruction, took it home and read it. This man already possessed a Testament, which he had bought some time before, but finding that he could make nothing of it, had laid it aside. Reading this tract, however, threw a new light on the Word of God, which he now took up and read with interest. When he next came to Hankow he visited one of the chapels and learnt more of the Truth. After a time he put down his name as an enquirer, and after further instruction was baptized at the Wesleyan chapel in Teh-ngan.

Teh-ngan is a large city a hundred miles from Hankow, where the Wesleyans opened a chapel some years ago. Three times the work has been temporarily stopped by riots. Once when Mr. David Hill was living there, a mob assembled outside his house, shouting and yelling as only a Chinese mob can. Mr. Hill calmly went out and faced the rioters, asking them what they wanted? For a moment they were utterly taken aback, but soon recovered themselves, and pushing in, smashed the furniture, tore the scrolls down from the walls, and threw his books and cherished photographs into the fire. He watched them cut the leaves out of his Greek Testament and throw them on the flames, and then when the house was in ruins he left Teh-ngan, and came down to Hankow, having taken joyfully the spoiling of his goods. It was some time before his arm, which had been hurt by the rioters, recovered; but as soon as affairs had quieted down, he went back to his post at the city of "Virtuous Peace," for that is the meaning of Teh-ngan.

Mr. Hill did not then win the martyr's crown, for which, I think, he longed; but in 1896, when distributing relief among the huts of some starving refugees, he caught typhus fever, and after a short illness one of the most saintly, self-denying lives that has ever been lived on the mission-field came to its earthly end.

Work in a "country station" like Teh-ngan is often trying, for

by a country station in China we do not mean a pretty little chapel and manse among green fields, but a mission compound shut in by native houses in some inland city or town which is not an open port, so that there are no English people there except the missionaries.

Such a station is Hiaokan, the city of "Filial Influence," as its name implies. In 1876 Dr. John and Dr. Mackenzie paid a visit to that place. They were asked to go by Mr. Wei, an earnest Christian, who had been converted two years before while listening to the preaching in Hankow. Before his conversion he had been an inveterate gambler, but he trusted in Christ to save him from that and from all other sin; and from being a selfish gambler he became an earnest preacher. Within the first year of his Church membership he had brought thirteen men to Christ. Soon after that he was appointed an evangelist in the district round Hiaokan, where before long there were many candidates for baptism.

But a rough reception awaited the foreign missionaries on their first visit there. A mob assembled, and stones and clods of earth were thrown from every direction. They managed to escape to the house of a kind friend, who took them in for the night. Sitting round the table at midnight, one of the brethren began to utter deep sighs over the failure of the days!" "Alas!" said he, "the enemy has triumphed. It looks very dark. The kingdom of God is driven out of Hiaokan."

Mr. Wei looked at the old man, brought his fist down on the table with a heavy thud, and said, "Brother, do you think that this sort of thing can knock the kingdom of God into nothing? No! ten thousand times no!"

And Mr. Wei was right. The officials were appealed to, and they promised protection, and invited Dr. John to visit Hiaokan again. The people were very quiet and friendly, and hundreds came to listen to the preaching.

Since then the work has been most encouraging. In 1893 Mr. and Mrs. Terrell and Dr. Walton went to live in the city of Hiaokan,

and a number have been added to the Church both in the city and in the country villages throughout the district. Dr. Walton opened not only a hospital, but a leper asylum, which has lately been enlarged to take in twenty-four men. All its present inmates are Christians, and their prayers are very earnest. They say, "We cannot work ourselves for Thee, but we can pray for the workers. That is for them; this is for us." And so they do what they can.

As a rule the people are friendly, but there was a disturbance there in 1800 when the students had come into the city for the examinations. A woman died in the hospital after an operation, and a crowd of students assembled, and, of course, said that she had been killed by the foreign devils. They threw stones into the passage and yelled, and when a magistrate tried to restore order they threw stones at him and cut his head open. Dr. Walton dressed the wound for him, though he was very much afraid of the foreigners.

Happily when the list of successful students was posted up in another part of the city, the crowd left the mission premises and rushed off to see who had passed the examinations, and as the students soon after left the city, peace was restored. The chief offenders had to apologise, and give a written guarantee for future good behaviour. Since then all has been quite peaceful.

But the mission has had other trials. Just as the work seemed prospering and extending in every direction, it lost its energetic and enthusiastic head. Mr. Terrell, whose untiring labours will never be forgotten through all that district, was struck down with cholera, and after a few hours' illness he was called away, to more important work, surely, elsewhere.

Other workers have gone to Hiaokan, and a knowledge of the Gospel is being spread abroad through all the country round. Missionaries often go for tours, preaching in the different towns and villages, but not many ladies have done so in that neighbourhood. Last year, while Mrs. Gillison was staying in Hiaokan,

she visited a village where no English lady had ever been seen before, and I think an account of her experiences will interest you. She says:—

"The visit I am about to record came about in the following way. Before the morning service last Sunday I went into the girls' school here to have a hymn with the children. Two country women were waiting about, and finding it too early to go into the chapel they followed me into the school. They seemed delighted with the singing, especially with the chorus of the little hymn 'I am so glad that Jesus loves me,' in which they tried to join. On questioning them I found that one of them had been baptized and that the other wished to be. They both had come by boat from villages in the Mao Tsen Tu district, five miles from here. I said that I should like to visit them, as I had heard there were quite a number of Christians in that part, and the two women replied that if I would go they would come and fetch me. I accepted the offer, so on the appointed day they came.

"We got into a boat, the floor of which was flat, so we all had to sit down as tailors sit, my hat just touching the mat over my head. As soon as we had started the women began to make the most of their unusual companion. They stroked my hands, and looked me up and down, and questioned me about my clothes generally. They asked many questions, too, about my life in Hankow, and they said they thought they really must try to go there some day to see me. They said they had been laughed at by their fellow-villagers when they had started, saying they were going to fetch a foreign lady, but though they knew there would be plenty of excitement when I arrived, they would see that the people did not hurt me.

"One of them opened a packet of coarse brown sugar, and put some into the palm of my hand, saying that it was 'Hao chi' (good to eat). After each taking and eating a pinch we continued chatting pleasantly till our boat journey came to an end.

"On leaving the boat Mrs. Tang took my hand, and though it

was extremely awkward sometimes, as the path was narrow and dirty, she would not leave go till I reached her house. Arrived there, the people crowded in, and many remarks were made, chiefly, I think, about my fair hair and skin.

"The house had a good big guest-room, into which the front door opened, while a little dark bedroom led out of it on either side.

"Directly I got inside a crowd tried to follow. My friends, however, resolutely shut the door in their faces and bolted it. They said I must eat first. The people outside became noisy and clamoured to come in; the women still shouted back that they must wait, but that presently I would preach to them. The crowd still would not go, but pushed so hard that presently the bolts gave way, and in they poured. One woman was busy preparing eggs for me, the other was sitting by me, and after an ejaculation of indignation, she hustled me into the bedroom and bolted the door from inside, so that she was still with me. The same noise went on now outside the bedroom door. For a minute or two I did not know whether I ought to wait for my eggs or not; but fearing the crowd might get angry and do mischief, I asked if I might go out and speak to them. This I did. Directly we opened the door they were quite polite, and they said they wanted me to preach. I said I was afraid they would not hear very well, but I would try. They were standing so thick around me that I felt I must mount on something. I tried a stool, but it was narrow and shaky; so, not being at my ease, I mounted on a table close by. Then behind me I had three idols, and red candles were stuck up—the usual kind of thing that you see in nearly every house in China. I talked a minute or two, telling them briefly that our doctrine was the doctrine of the only true God, and that the idols which I could point to behind me were no gods at all. I kept asking them if they understood, and they answered readily, 'Yes, we understand quite well; go on, go on.' I did not speak for more than a few minutes then, however, for I saw there

was a good deal of pushing and elbowing in the doorway, and I thought it would be better not to let the room be so crammed, so I suggested that we should move out into the open air. They readily agreed, and trooped out while I came down from my table.

"I had a little bag in my hand which I had packed with old Christmas cards and also the 'Mrs. Grimké' cards with Chinese texts on them. The people near me were continually interrupting my talk to know what I had in this bag, so I opened it, and began distributing the cards. They were seized eagerly, but, not having enough for all, I doubt whether I should take any if I were going again. This done I was told the eggs were ready. I re-entered the house; this time fewer people followed, still the room was fairly full. The eggs were what we should call poached, and were floating in a basin of the same sugar-water. I had a pair of chopsticks given me to eat them with (not new ones, I fear), and I alone had to eat, my hosts had not prepared any for any one else. I could manage them pretty well, though eggs are slippery things for chopsticks, and if one fell it caused a little splash of the sugar-water. I think there were eight in the basin, of which I managed to eat three. The syrup one was expected to drink as you would tea, by lifting up the basin.

"After this refreshment I was again asked to get on the table and preach. All was orderly this time, and I had a little longer talk. The woman in whose house I was came up with an explanation that the idols behind me did not belong to her and her husband, but to the family who shared the house with them. I hope this was a true explanation, for I had been disappointed at seeing them when the woman had told me they were Christians. Our native assistant will have to find out if it was true.

"The other woman, Mrs. Tang, was very anxious that I should sing to them as I had done to the children, indeed she tried to do so herself; so I sang the chorus, 'I am so glad,' which the women present liked very much, and I had to sing it again and again. I daresay they will remember that better than anything else I said.

"This time my preaching was stopped by my being told that the rice-cakes were ready. They were brought to me, and these also I ate with chopsticks, and again the accompaniment was the same brown sugar. I struggled through as many as I could, though I confess they were not appetising. This time one of my friends ate them with me. When we had finished, I looked at my watch, and, seeing it was 3 p.m., I said if they would get a chair for me I should be glad.

"I forgot to say that before leaving the house I had been asked to accept some eggs and take them home for my little boy. They were put in my bag where the Christmas cards had been. At the little market town I went into the house of a Christian to wait while the chair was brought. There I was given more eggs, which, as my bag was full, I put into my handkerchief in true country style. Then I said good-bye, as my chair was ready. Real friendliness was depicted on all the faces. I felt truly grateful to my two friends who had taken so much trouble to fetch me and to see I was treated properly.

"Only three or four years ago Mr. Terrell and others from Hankow looked upon that place, Mao Tsen Tu, as a dangerous, unfriendly town. I felt very thankful to have been able to pay a visit there in such perfect friendliness, leaving with eggs in my handkerchief instead of thrown at my back."

Another country district in which the knowledge of the Gospel is spreading rapidly is called T'ien-men, that means "The Gate of Heaven." It is about a hundred and twenty miles from Hankow, but when Dr. John and Mr. Bonsey went there in 1895 they were four days on the way. They visited many towns and villages, preaching to great crowds everywhere. As soon as it was known that two foreigners had arrived, there was a tremendous rush into the house where they were. There was a large open space in one village where they preached for hours to attentive hearers. The evenings were spent in examining candidates for baptism, and in the course of that journey over a hundred were baptized.

Two years afterwards Dr. John and Mr. Bonsey visited that district again. When they left their boat they found ponies provided for them by the converts. Mr. Bonsey wrote an interesting account of this journey. He says, "One of the mild excitements of travelling in this way is the uncertainty of the beasts provided.



A COUNTRY CHAPEL.

On a former journey, after the beast I was riding had fallen with me three times in ten minutes, I felt it was growing decidedly monotonous to be projected forcibly into the wheat-fields at such frequent intervals, so I decided to walk, much to the disgust of the horse owner, who feared lest he might lose part of his pay.

Some of the ponies are nasty and vicious; the really good ones are few.

"At Yü Fang Hung our reception was most cordial and our host very kind, but it was no small trial to be on show for twelve hours at a stretch, without a single moment to oneself. The curiosity of the Chinese is insatiable. They stand and gaze at one with a dull, vacant stare, which is calculated to drive the average Anglo-Saxon out of his mind in less than a quarter of an hour. It is a fixed, stony stare, which gives no promise of ever relaxing, but inevitably suggests the idea of infinite duration. The only relief to be had is by preaching to the starers, and there was no lack of opportunity to deliver our message. Six hours' journey on a boat provided by the next group of inquirers brought us to their village. From the boat a long, stately procession in single file wended its way to the houses. The whole countryside poured out to look at it. We were simply delighted with the knowledge of Gospel truth displayed by the candidates."

A hundred and forty-four men, women and children were baptized on this journey, and when the missionaries were leaving the district they were feasted grandly and escorted to their boat by a large number of Christians, who pressed upon them presents of fowls, eggs, and sweetmeats, and then sang "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah," as a parting salutation.

Dr. John sent an account of the same journey, in which he says:—

"Some of the candidates interested me greatly. One is a blind old man, who had been a fortune-teller for many years. His knowledge of the truth we found to be unusually good. When asked why he gave up his fortune-telling, being blind, and so dependent upon it for his daily food, he replied, 'I used to believe in fortune-telling without the least doubt; I was then blind. The Gospel opened my eyes, and I saw it was all false, and gave it up as a wrong thing to do.' I don't think there can be much doubt as to the sincerity of the old man.



A CHRISTIAN FAMILY WITH UNBOUND FEET.

"I was glad to find in Tien-men that an anti-foot-binding movement had been started at two of our stations. The wife of our native evangelist has set her feet free, and the wife of our senior deacon has followed her example by unbinding her own feet and those of her daughter. No sooner did I enter the deacon's house than the little girl walked up to me, and, lifting up one of her tiny feet, said, 'Pastor, please look at my foot, and see how large it is!' The little thing seemed delighted with the change, and well she might.

"There is a strong movement setting in at present in China against this barbarous custom."

Since Dr. John wrote that I have been glad to hear of several of our Christian women and girls in Hankow who have unbound their feet during the last few months, and we hope that soon Christian mothers will all give up the cruel practice of binding their little daughters' feet. Girls with large feet are so looked down upon in Central China that it is not easy, but if the Christians learn to believe that it is not God's will that the children should suffer so much and be maimed for life, surely they will care more to please God than men, and be willing to suffer shame, if need be, that His will may be done.

CHAPTER XIII

MISSIONARY PERILS

BEGINNING work in new districts is not always so safe and pleasant as Dr. John and Mr. Bonsey found it on these journeys, for the way there had been prepared for them by native evangelists, who had sown much seed before the visits of the foreign missionaries.

Very different was the experience of the Swedish Society which tried to open a new station at Sung-pu, a town to the north-east of Hankow, in 1893. Two young missionaries, Mr. Wickholm and Mr. Johannsen, neither of whom had been three years in China, went to stay in a native house there, which had been rented by the mission. The officials and gentry were determined not to have any foreign barbarians there, and before they had been in the place two months they stirred up the people to drive them out. On July 1st an angry crowd assembled in front of their house, shouting out, "Kill, kill!" The young men went upstairs by a little ladder into the loft, hoping that the mob would think they were not in the house, and would disperse quietly. But after a time they beat open the door and rushed in. For hours the missionaries lay still in the loft, without food or drink, listening in suspense to the roar of the mob below them. At last a man came up the ladder, opened the trap-door, and seeing the foreigners, yelled out to those in the room beneath. The Swedes escaped on to the roof, but were pursued as they ran by men with knives and choppers all along the roofs of the whole row of little houses. When they got to the end of the row there was nothing for it but to jump down into the street, where a surging mob of infuriated men was waiting to kill them. As they jumped they fell to the

ground, and were speedily stoned to death by their persecutors. For three days their bodies lay in the street, and it was only with great difficulty that their friends at last got their bodies brought to Hankow for burial. The news of their murder went home by the next mail, and with it went a happy letter, all unconscious of impending danger, written a day or two before by Mr. Wickholm to the girl who was hoping to come out in a few weeks to be his bride.

That is the last missionary murder that we have had in Central China, but it was not the first. Thirty years ago Mr. Johnson, of the Bible Society, left Chinkiang with a native colporteur and a number of Scripture portions which he wished to sell. He never returned, and for twenty years it was not known what had become of him. Then another colporteur who was journeying in the same direction anchored for the night at a small town near the border of Honan. The people were very unfriendly, and pelted him with lumps of clay, besides stealing his books. One of his boatmen went on shore to smoke opium. In the opium-den the topic of conversation was the attack on the foreign devil. The keeper of the shop was an old man, and he said, "Twenty years ago there was another foreigner here selling books. During the day a fire broke out and burned a large part of the place. The people attributed this fire to the evil influences of the foreigner. At dead of night a body of men went on board his boat and killed the foreigner, his assistants, and all on board. The boat was likewise destroyed." There seems very little doubt that the foreigner whom they murdered was Mr. Johnson.

1891 is a year that will long be remembered by missionaries all along the valley of the Yangtse. It seemed as if the officials were making organized plans to get rid of the hated foreigners through the whole valley.

The Roman Catholic cathedral, schools, and other houses were burnt at Wuhu, and they had trouble in several other places.

The Wesleyan Mission had had a station at Wusueh, the next port on the Yangtse below Hankow, for nearly twenty years, but at this place a riot was got up to try to expel the missionaries.

Would you like to know how they get up riots in China? I will tell you what they did at Wusueh. A man came into the town carrying four little babies in two baskets, which were fastened to a bamboo



CHINESE CHILDREN.

placed across his shoulder. He was accused of kidnapping and taken before the magistrate. He said he was going to take them to the Roman Catholic foundling house at Kiukiang, and that eight other

men were also collecting babies in the villages near to take there too. A crowd gathered and set on the man, and in the scuffle one of the babies was smothered. Instantly the cry was raised, "They will take the baby to the Wesleyan Mission to make medicine of." A rush was made for the mission houses. Three ladies and some little children were the only foreigners there just then, as the men were away, visiting village stations. Stones were thrown at the windows, and the house was set on fire. The ladies and children took refuge in an out-house, but the door was soon burst in, and men rushed at them with stones and bamboos, and they had to make their escape through a back door into the chapel. The mob followed them, and in the scuffle one of the children got lost, but after an hour or so its nurse found it in a heathen woman's arms. The ladies made their way to the mandarin's house for protection, but at first he refused to take them in, and it was only after they had remained in hiding in a little hut for some time that he sent soldiers to escort them to a place of safety.

Mr. Argent, a young member of the Joyful News Mission, who had only been a few months in China, was at Wusueh at the time, staying with Mr. Green, a custom-house officer, who had taken him in while he was waiting for a steamer to take him to Hankow. When they saw by the glare that the mission house was on fire, they hurried to the spot to see if they could be of any help. The servants met them and told them the ladies were not there, but they did not know enough Chinese to understand that the servants were warning them that it would be dangerous for them to go on. As soon as the mob saw them they set upon them and killed them both.

If the other missionaries had been in Wusueh, it is nearly certain that they would have shared the same fate, but the mob did not kill their wives. When one of the ladies was in the clutches of the mob some interfered and said, "Don't kill her. Make her tell where her husband is; we will kill the men."

While the ladies and children were in the mandarin's house a steamer came in sight, and very thankful were they to be taken on board and to get safely to Hankow. Before long the absent mission-

aries also reached that port. There was no doubt at all that the trouble was connived at by the officials, for the people of the place have always been friendly, and since the riot mission work has gone on there as usual.

That disturbance was in June; in September there was one something like it in Ichang, a city four hundred miles further up the Yangtse than Hankow. People came to the Roman Catholic convent and said their child had been stolen and brought there. A crowd collected, and several of the foreign houses were burnt. First the rioters seized the servants and asked where the foreigners kept their silver. Being told that there was no store of silver in the houses, for the foreigners used cheques, they said, "Then where is the kerosine tin?" Saturating the woodwork of the house with kerosine it was soon in a blaze. Happily there was a steamer in port, and before long the missionaries and other foreigners, whose houses had been burnt, were all safely on board. Some of the Sisters from the convent were badly hurt, but no one was killed. That riot, too, was got up by the officials; the soldiers who were sent to protect the houses themselves stole whatever they could! It was wonderful that no lives were lost. The members of the Presbyterian mission owed their escape to the presence of a visitor with whom they had gone on the river just before the outbreak. They hurried back, and one of them had just time to rush to his house and seize his two youngest children, who had been left at home, when the rioters arrived. He was able to take them to the steamer, where the rest of the party already were. None of them saved anything but the clothes they stood up in, and had there not been a steamer in port some would certainly have been killed.

It is at times like this that missionaries read the second Psalm with a deep realization of its meaning: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? . . . Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." It is a grand thing to realize that God reigns over all, and that no missionary can be killed and no riot take place unless He permits it.

There are other dangers in connection with mission work in the

interior besides those caused by riots and disturbances. Travelling in China is often perilous. When people in England think of shipwrecks they talk of "those in peril on the sea," but a voyage up some of the great Chinese rivers in a native boat is more dangerous than a long journey across the ocean in a fine mail steamer. I think



A PASSENGER BOAT GOING UP A RAPID.

there have been more boats lost in the Yangtse rapids than anywhere else in China.

The first English missionaries to go up these rapids were Dr. John and Mr. Wylie, who went to Sz-chuen in 1868. At that time there were no Protestant missionaries in all Western China; now they are to be found in most of the largest cities, and many voyages up and down the rapids are taken by them every year.

The native boats used for these long voyages are large and com-

fortable, if not too crowded. When there is a fair wind they sail along gaily, but they always have to be towed up the rapids.

Hundreds of trackers live on the banks, and are hired as they are needed by the boatmen. Horses are not used, the boats are always towed by men. The rocks rise precipitously on each side of the narrow gorges down which the river rushes furiously, but the trackers manage to keep their footing along the narrow paths, and unless the rope breaks, they pull the boat over the rapids into smoother water beyond. But the strain on the ropes is tremendous; they often snap under it, and then the unwieldy boat goes swirling down with the rushing current, and may be dashed against the rocks which stud the river in these gorges. It is an exciting time for all on board.

A dear old Quaker, Mr. Isaac Sharp, gave us a graphic account of his experiences as he came down the rapids. He said, "It was a time, not for anxiety, but for serious thought. I knew the Lord would take care of me, but whether it would be in this world or the next I did not know."

The L.M.S. began work in Chungking, a large city 1,400 miles up the Yangtse, in 1888, when Mr. and Mrs. Wilson went to live there. They were joined in 1893 by Mr. Walford Hart, who journeyed up the river with Mr. Wigham, of the Friends' Mission. They were shipwrecked in the rapids, and I am sure you will like to read Mr. Hart's account of what happened. This is the letter he wrote to his brother:—

"TEMPLE NEAR KWEI CHOW,

" *Thursday, February 2nd, 1893.*

"You will, perhaps, wonder at this very strange address; but the fact is Mr. Wigham and I have joined the 'submerged tenth'—in plain language, we are *shipwrecked mariners*.

"Yesterday we were just having dinner in our little sitting-room on board our boat, and looking out through the open window, when something seemed to go wrong. I saw the men on the bank pulling away at our rope, but losing their hold. Then the boat went over on

its side, and the water came streaming in through the window and everywhere else. Mr. Wigham escaped by the doorway, and I through the opposite window. We met on the top—*i.e.*, the *side* of the boat, which was now uppermost; and there we were—the skipper, his wife and baby, our three men, and ourselves—drifting rapidly down the swift Yangtse. We hailed a 'red boat,' a sort of official lifeboat, and, happily, before long we drifted into quieter water, and with the help of the red boat and another we got ashore. We stranded opposite a temple, where we were told we could be taken in. We went up to it, and found that the priests could give us the use of one room in the temple yard, which we were very glad of. Yesterday afternoon was taken up in getting boxes and portmanteaus out of the boat, and in spreading the things out to dry on the sandy bank, and in taking them up to the temple. Everything, except what we had on, was soaked, of course, and we had to spend the night between *borrowed* 'pukais' (a native mattress or bed)! The experiment was not so bad as we feared, and, of course, it was much better to do this than to get cold.

"To-day has been occupied in vain attempts to right the boat, and in floating boxes ashore after fishing them out with boat-hooks from the hold. The skipper and his men are camping down by the boat, and my boxes help to make up habitations for them. We are well looked after, and an official is here with five soldiers, who are stationed either in the temple or down by the boat.

"Friday, February 3rd.

"An attempt was again made this morning to get the boat up, but unsuccessfully. However, to-morrow some people from Kwei Chow are to come over in force, and the chief man thinks he can get it up. We transform the temple, right up to the shrine, into something like a rag fair, and our clothes are being spread out in the wind over a good area. . . . I have my cabin trunk now packed with dry things. My concertina, I am afraid, is quite done for. A few small articles have not yet come to light; perhaps they are still in the hold.

"We are feasting on the stores, but sadly find the need of bread; we are replacing it by small Captain biscuits. It seems very doubtful just now how long it will be before we can really get off.

"Saturday, February 4th.

"The men have come over from the other side, and about forty of them have set to work. After working some hours they managed to float the boat, and began baling the water out. Then followed an interesting search in the mud at the bottom of the boat for lost articles.

"Staying in a place like this does make one long to speak Chinese. The keeper of the temple was proposing to-day that prayer should be offered to the great man in whose honour the temple is erected, asking for a prosperous voyage. One does want to testify for Jesus here!"

Mr. Hart wrote brightly about his experiences, but his books and other treasures were sadly spoilt by the water, and it was a trying beginning to his short missionary life. He got on very well with the language, and in a remarkably short time was able to "testify for Jesus." The next year he again braved the rapids, and came down to Hankow to be married; but while there he became seriously ill, and in less than three short weeks after the wedding he passed away, leaving his brave young widow, Mary Hart, to work on lovingly and earnestly for another year, when she, too, was called to higher service above.

For of missionary perils the greatest in China is the climate. Out of the thousands of missionaries who, since the opening of China, have gone to that great country, very few have lost their lives in riots, and still fewer have been drowned; but fever, cholera, and dysentery have ended the earthly lives of many of the noblest workers there. I have heard some people say that missionaries ought only to be sent to the healthy parts of the world; but that was not what Christ said. His command was, "Go into *all* the world," and that is the command that we have to obey.

There are certain parts of the world which it is extremely diffi-

cult to evangelize, because the Government of those countries will not allow missionaries to live in them. That was the state of the greater part of the heathen world a century ago; but doors have been opened in every direction in answer to prayer, and now it is only true of a few places, the most important of which are Thibet, where the great Yangtse has its source, and the province of Hunan.

Missionaries are now labouring on the outskirts of Thibet, and hope soon to get into the heart of that priest-ridden country. No foreigners have yet been able to settle in Hunan, except very near the border; but many journeys have been made through the province, and much prayer has been offered that missionaries may soon be allowed to live there. Since I began writing this book, the Chinese Government has promised to open a port in Hunan for foreign trade; and as soon as ever they will allow Europeans to enter, the missionaries will go in with their glad message. Then the question will be whether Christians at home are prepared to provide for the extra expense of opening new stations, or whether their prayers for Hunan have been but empty words.

As I have just said, many journeys have been made through the province, which is much larger than England and Wales. I will give you an account of a journey taken some years ago by Mr. Archibald, of the Scotch Bible Society. He says:—

“We got as far as the capital (Changsha) unobserved, and one bright autumn morning we stepped ashore at the landing in front of the great west gate, in company with a native helper, and hopeful of being able to accomplish some work before the authorities came on the scene. Our stay was brief. Almost immediately a great shout of ‘Foreign devil come!’ ‘Beat him!’ ‘Kill him!’ was raised. There was a grand rush of people from all quarters, a good deal of hustling, tugging, and throwing of things, and before we could recover from our bewilderment we were in the hands of a dozen sturdy soldiers, being taken back to our boat to give an account of ourselves. We were soon convinced that we had better take our departure, and attempt to carry on operations elsewhere.

Next time we tried the plan of staying in our boat for awhile, in mid-stream opposite the city, in order to receive visitors, a plan which had answered well in other hostile places. Out here it was a complete failure, for no one came near us; and after three days spent in doing nothing we came away defeated again.

"On a third visit the authorities proposed that we might come to the great landing-stage and sell books from our boat, provided we did not seek to go ashore. We agreed; but even for this they required three days in which to make the necessary arrangements. These mainly consisted in covering the city with placards, all to the same effect—namely, that on the morning of the thirteenth two foreign devils would come to the great landing-stage, and every man must bring bricks and stones to beat them to death! Our boatman had been scared or bribed, and nothing would induce him to cross the river. But an old Christian connected with the L.M.S. told us that his boat was at our service.

"By the hour appointed we were ready. I shall never forget the scene. The whole frontage near the landing-stage had been cleared of ordinary boats, and a row of gunboats occupied their places. The sloping bank was packed full of a dense crowd of human beings; there were thousands and thousands of them. The silk dresses of the students, the gay uniforms and banners of the soldiers, and the sunlight flashing from their weapons, afforded a play of colour wonderful to behold. We were at anchor on the other side of the river right opposite, and the hour arranged for crossing was ten o'clock. Punctually to a minute our anchor was lifted, the sail raised, and over we went, accompanied by four escorting gunboats. As we drew near, we heard a yelling such as it falls to the lot of few to hear—a grand howl of execration from ten thousand throats of fellow-men. It sounded like something unearthly. When we were within range, down came the missiles—stones, bricks, broken implements and domestic utensils—everything throwable, in fact. We were under this shower about as long as one might count twenty, and then the performance had gone as far as it was in-

tended it should. We were bundled into the escorting boats alongside, and carried out of range in a moment. Old Li (the Christian boatman) never let go the rudder, but sailed his boat out after us as he had sailed her in, as calmly as if such showers were a matter of daily experience with him. He shovelled the rubbish out of his boat by the bushel, and it was found that astonishingly little damage had been done, either to person or property. It never seemed to strike him, then or afterwards, that he merited any special praise or pay.

"After this experience we passed and repassed Changsha often, but troubled it no more for some years."

When Mr. Archibald next went, he was able to sell Scripture portions and tracts in the suburbs of the city, but as soon as he tried to enter its gates the officer in charge came forward and ordered him off. He said he had instructions to keep foreign devils out, and they had better go away quietly. After that, even outside the city, their peace was at an end. They were set upon by a crowd of roughs, who stole their books and hustled them, so that they were thankful to be able to make their way to the river, get into a boat, and row away.

But though foreigners are not allowed to work as they would in Hunan, Chinese evangelists are able to do a good deal. Many men from the Hunan province come into the chapels at Hankow, and not a few have there been converted, and have become most earnest Christians.

One of these, Mr. Pêng, is doing a very good work in his native province. When he first became a Christian, he was much persecuted by his relations, but he stood firm and unshaken in his faith. When his brother was baptized in Hankow six years ago, he wrote him a touching letter, of part of which I will give you a translation. He says:—

"To my virtuous younger brother, Shao-ling,—Since I left Hankow for Hunan you have been ever in my thoughts. On the 21st inst. I received your letter informing me of your baptism on the 5th. We must diligently observe the customs of the Christian Church,

attend divine service regularly, and ever pray to the true God. We must also bring our mother to the services, so that she may



THREE EVANGELISTS: THE ONE TO THE RIGHT IS MR. PÉNG.

walk the heavenly way with us, and become partaker of eternal life. I am now in the city of Changsha, distributing the holy Book and preaching the Gospel. In the streets there are many who blaspheme

and revile us. Moreover, the people of Changsha all know that you and I have joined the Christian Church. The other day one of our clansmen had a consultation with some of the baser members of the clan in regard to us. They dragged me into the ancestral temple, where they beat me, reviled me, and wanted to kill me, because I had become a Christian. I was left with no alternative but to write out a paper expressing my willingness to be cast out of the clan. You and I, together with our children and grandchildren, can never again enter the ancestral temple. [This is a family club, not merely a place where the ancestors are worshipped.] As for me, I am quite willing that it should be so. Not only do I not regret the step I have taken, my joy is greatly increased, my heart is full of gladness. Now that you, my younger brother, have joined the Church, you will not be displeased with me on account of what I have done. Though our clansmen, together with our relations and friends in Changsha, despise us, and though many hate us and revile us, it is for us to manifest patience, and avoid all wrangling and disputing. Being disciples of Jesus, we must carry the cross. My worthy younger brother, don't be anxious. You and I, having received the grace of God, and become possessed of the truth, have God Himself for our Ancestor, the Gospel Hall is our ancestral temple, the pastors, the evangelists, and the Christians are our clansmen. I exhort my worthy younger brother to banish all double-mindedness, to walk straight ahead, and not go back a single step. I hold a prayer-meeting in the city of Changsha every day at 7 p.m. A few friends join me, five come regularly to the services. They have mastered the Christian Catechism, and have a clear knowledge of the truth. They have all made up their minds to come to Hankow and ask for baptism. The more I think about it the more I feel that the holy religion of Jesus must prosper, and that the Church must grow day by day. Let us on no account be ashamed to exhort men; if we do our duty, multitudes must come in. Greetings to the pastors, preachers, and all the brethren. May the peace of the Triune God be with you all!"

During the six years that have passed since that letter was written, many changes have taken place in that dark province. We hear that electric light has been introduced into the examination hall at Changsha, and that books on Western science are eagerly bought. Best of all, the light of the Gospel has shone into several dark hearts.

Last year, Dr. John and Mr. Sparham visited Hunan. Mr. Peng had told them of converts at a town called Hengchow, who were waiting to be baptized, and so they particularly wished to visit that place. They found the town in a state of great excitement because of the recent visit of a German traveller. They were attacked furiously by the mob and driven away, in the midst of a perfect shower of stones. But they were greatly encouraged by what they saw of the converts; they clung to the missionaries in the midst of the storm, and were very brave and fearless.

Having drifted down the stream for two miles, Dr. John ordered a halt for the night. Some of the candidates were on board at the time, and others soon arrived. They all asked the missionaries to baptize them. They tested their earnestness by saying, "You see we cannot protect you if difficulties spring up. We are driven out of the place, and cannot even protect ourselves. Had you not better wait awhile, and seriously count the cost before taking this step?" "We have waited long," was the reply, "and we do not wish to wait any longer. We are not afraid of the consequences if we confess ourselves Christians."

The missionaries were pleased with their courage, and examined them in their knowledge of Christian truth. This proving very satisfactory, all thirteen candidates were baptized during a little service held on board the boat. There are a good many Hunan men in the Hankow Church, but these were the first baptisms in the province of Hunan. Since that time others have joined them, so that now there are forty or fifty men meeting together in Hengchow every Sunday for Christian worship. There are little groups of Christians, too, in other Hunan towns, and we hope that before long

fresh centres may receive the Light, from which a knowledge of the Gospel shall radiate forth through the whole of the province.

It is still very dark. Most of the anti-foreign riots of recent years have been stirred up by placards and wicked tracts written and printed in Hunan, and circulated all along the valley of the Yangtse, urging the people to drive out the hated foreigners. The men of Hunan are very much in earnest, and when they give their hearts to Christ I believe they will be as enthusiastic in His service as they have been for so long in the service of the devil. But they cannot yield to His claims if they have never even heard of Him. We want more heralds of the Cross for Hunan. Will any who read this book dedicate themselves to this work? Is there any other object in the world so worthy of your ambition? To live that God's will may be done on earth, that Christ may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, that men may be saved from the sin and misery of heathenism—is not *this* more worth living for than to get rich or famous?

When a flash from the great white throne shows us life as it really is, how poor many of these earthly ambitions will look then, and how thankful we shall be if in our small measure we have had fellowship with Christ in His work of saving the world!

You can do something now by prayers and gifts, and interesting others in this work; and you can so live that if ever God calls you to be a missionary, you shall be fitted for the work, by a knowledge of your Bible and by a prayerful spirit, and by having learnt to be contented, unselfish, and loyally devoted to the will of God in your early days.



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